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**HYGIENE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ALUMNI
SATISFACTION IN ATTENDING
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY'S
SERVICE AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT
MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREES
FROM 1988 TO 1997**

by

Charles Frederick Farran IV

A Thesis submitted to the faculty of the
School of Food, Hotel, and Tourism Management
At Rochester Institute of Technology in partial
Fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of
Master of Science

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ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Department of Hospitality and Service Management
Graduate Studies

M.S. Service Management
Presentation of Thesis/Project Findings

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SATISFACTION IN ATTENDING ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY'S

SERVICE and HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT FROM 1988 TO 1997

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ABSTRACT

Prior to this study there have been no alumni satisfaction studies of the Department of Food, Hotel and Tourism Management Masters Degree Programs from Rochester Institute of Technology. The purpose of this study is to determine the level of satisfaction of alumni and the impact hygiene factors have on alumni satisfaction.

The initial element of the procedures was to conduct research. This research was accomplished through a review of pertinent literature. The review of literature was followed by the establishment of goals and parameters for this study. A survey was mailed to all the graduates of the F.H.T.M. masters programs. The population was reduced to those with an address on record with alumni relations office. The Total Design Method was employed in this study. Narrative tables were created to represent the written responses of graduates. Through the use of S.P.S.S. categorical tables were maintained to display the number of responses per category of the narrative comments. Biographical and demographical data was then cross-tabulated with satisfaction data using S.P.S.S. Through the employment of these cross-tabulations recommendations and conclusions were drawn.

The outcomes of this study demonstrate a high level of satisfaction. Employment status, work related to your major field of study, current income, promotions, time to receive first promotion, program format, and major field of study all appear to affect satisfaction. The top reasons for not attending R.I.T. again related to the curriculum, career, and value. Courses, curriculum and the interaction with students and faculty were mentioned most often by alumni reporting what benefited the greatest. The three most frequently mentioned recommended academic changes were regarding faculty, adding a

course(s), and other academic issues. Housing, placement services and other nonacademic issues were the most demonstrated recommended nonacademic changes.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER I. STATEMENT OF STUDY	1
Introduction	1
Problem Statement	2
Background	2
Purpose of Study	5
Hypothesis	5
Null Hypothesis	6
Significance of Study	6
Methodology	6
Literature Review	7
Definition of Terms	7
Assumptions	8
Scope and Limitations	9
Procedures	10
Long Range Consequences	11
Summary	12
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	13
Introduction	13
Sources of Literature	13
Historical Overview	13
Factors Associated with Alumni Satisfaction	14
Nature of Study	14
Theoretical Basis of Study	15
Pragmatic Basis of Study	17
Design and Methodology	18
Data Collection Methods.....	18
Total Design Method.....	18
Questionnaire Design	19
Motivations for Study.....	21
Levels of Management	22
Summary	22
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY	23

Introduction	23
Assumptions	23
Procedures	25
Setting of Study	28
Sample of Study	28
Period of Data Collection	29
Instrument.....	29
Statistical Software.....	36
Summary	36
 CHAPTER IV. ANALYSIS: RESULTS AND FINDINGS.....	 38
Introduction	38
Descriptive Statistics	38
Qualitative Data.....	61
Expected vs. Actual Results	88
Expectations	88
Results	89
Summary	103
 CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION.....	 105
Introduction	105
Conclusions	105
Recommendations	106
Summary	108
 REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY	 110
 APPENDICES	 115
Appendix A: Initial Cover Letter	115
Appendix B: Reminder Card.....	116
Appendix C: Week Four Cover Letter	117
Appendix D: Week Seven Cover Letter.....	118
Appendix E: Questionnaire	119

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

FIGURES

1. Another Degree Since Attending R.I.T.....	41
2. Enrollment Status.....	42
3. Employment Status.....	43
4. Choose R.I.T. Again.....	44
5. Program Format.....	45
6. Student Type.....	46
7. Gender.....	47
8. Age.....	48
9. Related Employment.....	49
10. Time to Find Employment.....	50
11. Current Position.....	51
12. Received Promotion.....	52
13. Time to Receive First Promotion.....	53
14. Starting Income.....	54
15. Current Income.....	55
16. Year of Graduation.....	56
17. Major Field of Study.....	57
18. Residency.....	58

TABLES

1. Year of Graduation * Response.....	59
2. Unsatisfied Alumni Narrative.....	60
3. Academic Most Beneficial Narrative.....	63
4. Academic Change Narrative.....	72
5. Nonacademic Change Narrative.....	80
6. Reason for Not Choosing R.I.T. Again.....	84
7. Benefited Alumni Most.....	85
8. Recommended Academic Change.....	86
9. Other Recommended Change.....	87
10. Employment Status * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	90
11. Time to Find Employment * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	91
12. Format * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	92
13. Gender * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	93
14. Current Income * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	94
15. Received a Promotion * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	95
16. Time to Receive First Promotion * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	96
17. Age * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	97
18. Related Employment to Field of Study * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	98
19. Major Field of Study * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	99
20. Year of Graduation * Current Income.....	100
21. Year of Graduation * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	101
22. Type of Student * Choose R.I.T. Again.....	102

* Denotes A Cross Tabulation

Chapter 1 – Statement of Study

Introduction

There are many reasons that colleges, universities and institutions should be interested in the success of its students. A successful student is more likely to complete their degree requirements. In addition, those who complete their education are more likely to be satisfied with the institution.

The recessed economy has increased price sensitivity of the higher education marketplace. In such a marketplace private institutions of higher learning need to be more concerned with alumni satisfaction. Some of the factors critically affected by student and alumni satisfaction are incoming enrollment, student retention rates, alumni giving and the activity level of the alumni population.

The level of satisfaction is a very complicated and difficult issue to measure. However, this does not diminish its importance and satisfaction remains a concern of any institution of higher learning.

What hygiene factors contribute to the dependent variable; satisfaction of graduates of a higher educational institution? Specifically, what are these hygiene factors for the alumni of Rochester Institute of Technology's (R.I.T.) Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management (F.H.T.M.) Master's degree programs? How do these hygiene factors relate to various demographic information such as nationality, gender, age, and

field of study? What is the relation of the independent variables of time to find employment, employment status, and employment within the related field of study, current salary and promotability to alumni satisfaction?

Problem Statement

The backbone of Rochester Institute of Technology's (R.I.T.) F.H.T.M. graduate degree programs is quality management. One of the major aspects of quality management is information about your customer's experience. For the purpose of this study R.I.T.'s customers will be defined as students in the traditional graduate and executive leader programs. To date no information had been gathered on the alumni satisfaction levels of the program. This study will accomplish this. The focus of this study is on the identification of hygiene factors that impact satisfaction and how these factors relate to alumni satisfaction and various demographic information.

Background

Col. Nathaniel Rochester founded R.I.T. in 1829 under the name Rochester Athenaeum. In 1885, the Mechanics Institute was founded by a group of Rochester businessmen. These two schools merged in 1891 to form the Rochester Athenaeum and Mechanics Institute (R.A.M.I.). Due to the increased specialization on professional programs R.A.M.I. renamed itself Rochester Institute of Technology in 1944.

The Department of F.H.T.M. is part of the College of Applied Science and Technology (C.A.S.T.). The Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management offers four baccalaureate programs: Nutrition Management, Travel Management, Food

Management and Hotel and Resort Management. In addition, the school offers two masters programs: Service Quality Management and Hospitality-Tourism Management. R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management traces its roots to 1892 with the establishment of the Cooking School. However, it wasn't until 1955 when a Bachelor of Science Degree was offered. Graduate programs in Hospitality-Tourism were first established in 1987 and in Service Quality Management in 1989. Presently R.I.T. has an enrollment of over 15,000 students distributed over eight colleges and more than 90,000 alumni.

The foundation of this thesis is based on two disciplines that are closely related; total quality management and outcomes assessment in higher education. Both are relatively new movements that were derived from the second half of the twentieth century.

Edwards Deming was the founder of T.Q.M. in post World War II Japan. Other notable leaders in the T.Q.M. movement are Philip Crosby and Joseph Juran. The first applications of T.Q.M. in higher education took place in 1988 by T. R. Stuelpnagel in an article titled Total Quality Management in Business and Academia. Further research of the application of T.Q.M. to higher education was accomplished by Edwin Coate in 1990, Sherr, Teeter, Marchese and Seymour in 1991, Brown and Koenig in 1993, Motwani in 1995, Fife, Klugman, Freed, Jann, Vazzana and Winter in 1997 and Welsh, Alexander and Dey in 2001. The major proponent of the total quality management movement is that customer satisfaction is paramount.

Strategies for outcomes assessment of higher education have been a concern of educators, policymakers and certifying agencies since the late 1970's. The proliferation of outcomes assessment occurred during the mid 1980's. Today, most states mandate the use of outcomes assessment.

Assessment at R.I.T. is at its infancy. C.A.S.T. first established outcomes assessment in Fall 2001 with the forming of a faculty committee with representatives from each department. The foundation of the outcomes assessment process is the departmental mission statements. The mission of F.H.T.M. is to help the student acquire and develop; (1) the theory and practical service strategies and skills essential to professional, executive-level management positions; (2) the ability to apply knowledge and original thinking to solving management problems; (3) the skills and techniques of leadership and teamwork; (4) A passion for a lifetime of learning; (5) an intellectual spirit for constructive thought and action while building a good life and contributing to society at large. In order to determine if the F.H.T.M. has accomplished its career oriented missions then graduates must be included in the process.

The foundation for this study is outlined in the R.I.T. Executive Summary dating from 1994. This initiative was developed in response to the certification process that R.I.T. decided to undergo and to achieve the institutional vision: to lead higher education in preparing students for successful career development over their lifetime. Since R.I.T. is concerned with lifetime career development then it is the alumni who must be examined. As a component of the certification process R.I.T. must submit Periodic Review Reports to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The Periodic

Review Reports are composed from the Self-Study by the institution and the Middle States Evaluation Team. The Self-Study is partially comprised of alumni surveys further forming the background of this study. Although this study will not be used in the certification process it is however validated as a research approach. The 1997 Self-Study identified student retention as a major concern of the institution. The Retention Action Plan of 2000 establishes a 75% graduation rate goal for May 2007.

The Purpose

This thesis acts as a resource of information for prospective students, faculty, staff, alumni, students, and administration of R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management. The rate of satisfaction among alumni as regards their R.I.T. experience has been reported. The research will be used to reveal what elements of R.I.T. benefited the alumni the most and what changes the graduates would recommend. Hygiene factors have been examined to determine their impact on alumni satisfaction. In addition, any associations among hygiene factors and demographic factors of alumni have been identified.

Hypothesis

This study has used a variety of hygiene factors to measure the satisfaction levels of alumni of the graduate program of the Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management. The researcher believes that there is a high degree of satisfaction among the aforementioned alumni. Due to the relatively high retention rates of F.H.T.M. students compared to other departments at R.I.T.

It is the researcher's belief that the following results are likely to be discovered. Executive Leader graduates will be more likely to be satisfied with their experiences at R.I.T. Higher current annual income rates will yield higher satisfaction rates. Inversely, lower current annual income rates will yield lower satisfaction rates. Alumni who have not been in work related to their field of study will have lower rate of satisfaction. Alumni who have not received a promotion will have lower satisfaction rates. Additionally, the level of satisfaction decreases as the duration for a promotion increases. Graduates who are unemployed will have lower satisfaction rates. Alumni who took longer to obtain employment will have a lower level of satisfaction.

Null Hypothesis

If the hypothesis of the researcher is proved to be false then alumni will exhibit a middle or low level of satisfaction.

Significance of the Study

The importance of this study lies in its ability to identify and measure factors effecting the satisfaction of graduates from R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management masters programs. This study may then be used to improve the program and give it a competitive advantage over other academic institutions.

Methodology

The methodology chosen for this study is descriptive and takes a present perspective. Alumni from the Food, Hotel, and Travel Management graduate programs have been surveyed. Satisfaction levels were studied and related to the following; time to

find employment, employment status, and employment within the related field of study, current salary, nationality, promotability, type of program, year of graduation, gender, age and field of study.

Literature Review

Subjects to be reviewed include: alumni satisfaction studies, the impact of alumni satisfaction on enrollment, descriptive studies, factors which correlate to alumni satisfaction, calculating alumni satisfaction, surveying methods, the Total Design Method, questionnaire design, statistical software and defining rates of satisfaction.

There are extensive authorities on the aforementioned subjects. The specific issue addressed in this thesis has a broad range of supporting documentation. The literature search identified important writings in this subject area and other relevant areas. These writings include industry periodicals, papers, and texts.

Definition of Terms

1. Alumni: Graduate students who have received their master's degree from the institution.
2. Collapsing: Also referred to clustering in this thesis, it is the combination of more than one response to the questionnaire or survey data.
3. College: A division or school of a university or institution offering courses and granting degrees in a particular field.
4. Customer: A student of an academic program.

5. Department: A distinct, usually specialized division of a large organization, especially: a division of a school or college dealing with a particular field of knowledge.
6. High Level of Satisfaction: Greater than plus one percent of the satisfaction level from an alumni study conducted in 1997 by the alumni affairs office of R.I.T.
7. High Income: Alumni reporting current income in the top half of the survey from \$35,000 and higher.
8. Hygiene Factor: Independent variables that are non demographical by nature.
9. Middle Level of Satisfaction: An alumni satisfaction rate of 86 to 88 percent.
10. Level of Satisfaction: The percent of graduates who would attend R.I.T. again if they had to make the decision over.
11. Low Level of Satisfaction: Greater than one percent below the satisfaction level from an alumni study conducted in 1997 by the alumni affairs office of R.I.T.
12. Objectiveness: Uninfluenced by emotions or personal prejudices: *an objective critic*.

Ideological Assumptions

Surveys were mailed to the all of graduates of R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management master's degree programs with a known address who graduated between 1988 and 1997. The population of this study is all the alumni from F.H.T.M. masters program. The entire group of graduates determined through alumni affairs records with known addresses makes up the sample. In order to maximize return rates Dillman's procedure was used. In order to maintain confidentiality a coding system

was used on the surveys. Possible bias of the researcher's was reduced through the use of a statistical package, reporting of actual data as given by respondents and adhering to other researchers generally accepted practices.

Procedural Assumptions

Although both telephone and mail surveys are useful in the proper context and application the data-gathering device that will be used in this study is the mail questionnaire. The mail questionnaire was chosen for a set of reasons. As Dillman stated mail questionnaires; (1) have unobtrusive and inexpensive qualities; (2) have an ability to be tested; (3) have a higher probability of reaching the respondent; (4) have a reduced chance for a socially desirable bias; (5) have high response rates when sent to a homogeneous group; (6) have the capability of being conducted anonymously; (7) have no length limitations (1978). In addition, mail questionnaires have a lower likelihood of suffering from interviewer distortion and subversion. Because enhanced reliability of the data is desirable the mail questionnaire is a good selection. Reliability is enhanced due to the fact that a large percent of the population may be solicited. This would be impossible for group or individual interviews when considering the geographical distribution of the population. At this point the researcher would like to reiterate the fact that this method will be pilot-tested to substantiate its validity.

Scope

This study has identified the level of satisfaction, areas affecting satisfaction and associate satisfaction to hygiene factors. These hygiene factors are to include time to find

employment, employment status, and employment within the related field of study, current salary, nationality, promotability, gender, age, and field of study.

Limitations

The study has five major limitations. First, the population for this study is decentralized which adds to the difficulty of locating and communicating with them. Next, the limited size of the sample has reduced the ability to isolate subgroups of the population and form firm conclusions relating to those subgroups. The only target group for this study is the alumni of the F.H.T.M. masters program; however, the responses have been subdivided into different categories for analysis. The target group is subdivided to identify any associations of satisfaction with the hygiene factors. In addition, alumni may not have been in contact with the Institute for long periods of time, thus decreasing response rates, decreasing the accuracy of what they report and adding to the difficulty of finding them. This introduces the possibility of bias and potentially decreases the level of reliability. Fourth, respondents will probably be reticent to reveal such private matters as salary. Finally, since salary data has been collected and reported in ranges and not exact dollar figures a definitive quantitative statement may not be made pertaining to salary data.

Procedures

The first step in the procedure is to determine the goals of the thesis. Next, the researcher builds the proposal. Following the establishment of the proposal a review of the appropriate literature is conducted. The fourth step of this thesis study is to design

the mail questionnaire and supporting documents. Subsequently, the researcher must implement the survey and collect and monitor the replies. Once the replies are gathered they are then entered into a statistical package and narrative tables. Appropriate calculations are made. The data is then analyzed and interpreted. Last, the findings are reported with recommendations made.

Long Range Consequences

Should the findings of this study be in accordance with the hypothesis, then it would be expected that enrollment could increase due to increased word of mouth advertising and other factors. Further, if the hypothesis is upheld, then R.I.T. should increase the implementation of alumni testimonials in its marketing strategy.

Should the result be to the null hypothesis, R.I.T. needs to implement a systematic improvement program based on the use of the alumni recommendations from this study.

Regardless of the findings of this study the Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management should create an alumni panel with the purpose of improving the program. In addition, further research into the factors contributing to satisfaction.

There are other long-term implications that imply by this study which need further research. Satisfaction factors may be linked to employment; therefore R.I.T. should closely examine the need to bolster its placement program. Further, it would seem as though the Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management should analyze the

apparent differences in the levels of satisfaction between the traditional and executive leader formats and the Hospitality and Service Management majors. Since there seems to be an increased level of satisfaction of the executive leader format, alumni there, should be increased enrollment that is perpetuated by increased word of mouth advertising.

Summary

In the preceding chapter the issues that lay the foundation of this study have been addressed. These issues fell into the following areas; problem statement, background, purpose, significance, methodology, review of the literature, hypothesis, null hypothesis, definition of terms, assumptions, scope, limitations, procedures and long range consequences.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Introduction

Subjects to be reviewed include: historical overview, nature of the study, theoretical basis of the study, pragmatic basis of the study, factors that are associated with alumni satisfaction, surveying methods, the Total Design Method, questionnaire design, statistical software, motivations to conduct the study, and levels of management.

Sources of Literature

There are extensive sources on the aforementioned subjects. The specific issue addressed in this thesis has a broad range of supporting documentation. The literature search identified important writings in this subject area and other relevant areas. These writings include industry periodicals, papers, and texts.

Historical Overview

Institutions of higher learning have conducted assessments based on alumni surveys since the middle of the twentieth century. The size of institutions that have conducted alumni satisfaction studies range from small colleges such as Albion College to gigantic state systems such as those found in Oregon and Illinois. These institutions are geographically dispersed across the United States and located abroad. Schools from the community college level to Ivy League Universities have conducted such studies. Forty percent of large research oriented universities conduct student and alumni

satisfaction and employment surveys (Ory & Parker, 1989). A key measure of satisfaction in many of these studies has been would the alumni attend again.

Factors Associated with Alumni Satisfaction

Brown and Koenig conducted an alumni satisfaction study for Oregon State University in 1993. Respondents identified factors for measuring the performance of an institution of higher learning. These factors ranked from highest to lowest accordingly; employment of alumni, success/performance of alumni, satisfaction of alumni, income, graduation rate, knowledge, college reputation, admissions to the next level of degree program and recruiting top candidates. The top four factors were incorporated as major components in this study.

Nature of the Study

This study is descriptive by nature. Descriptive studies are conducted to find data regarding the current and historical conditions or variables that exist (Key, 1997), draw conclusions and make recommendations (CARET, 2003, para. 3). One of the methods for conducting descriptive research is the use of a survey to ascertain the current status and relationships among variables (Key, 1997). Descriptive Research is conducted by the following eight-step process; (1) devise the problem statement; (2) the researcher must identify the data necessary to find a solution to the problem; (3) choose and develop the data-gathering device; (4) find who the target population is and what sampling process to employ; (5) the data will be analyzed by cross-tabulating satisfaction responses with hygiene and demographic data and narratives will be grouped by similar answers and

ranked from most to least occurring responses; (6) gather the data; (7) examine the data; (8) make generalizations (Key, 1997).

Qualitative research has many virtues. It can produce much deeper representation of individuals' behaviors, feelings and attitudes (Johns & Lee-Ross, 1998). Further, qualitative research is more suitable for the service industry due to the method's inherent flexibility and adaptability and the dynamic nature of the industry (Johns & Lee-Ross, 1998). Qualitative research is capable of expressing experiences that may not be easily expressed numerically (Berg, 1995). In addition, qualitative research has the potential to probe deeply, reveal subtle and complex issues (Johns & Lee-Ross, 1998) and find empirical information and data (Gummesson, 2000). Qualitative research is a useful and value added approach to research.

Theoretical Basis of the Study

The basis for this study is derived from Total Quality Management (T.Q.M.). Deming's fourteen points were created mainly for the manufacturing sector of the economy, however they may be adapted to the service sector (Deming, 1986). As part of the service sector of the economy it would follow that T.Q.M. may be applied to higher education. Further, The Chronicle of Higher Education supports the use of Deming's fourteen-point process in colleges and universities (Grassmuck, 1990). Additional support for the use of T.Q.M. may be found in the high level of complexity and severity of problems facing colleges and universities and their need for a new method in problem solving (DeCosmo, Heverly, & Parker, 1991).

Customer focus is an essential principle of T.Q.M. (Sherr, 1991). To have such a focus, the customer must first be identified. Formerly the focus has been on the universities administration, educational peers and collegiate associations, however, this does not account for all the customers (Brown & Koenig, 1993). The test to validate the label of “primary customer” is in the form of a question. This question is; which customer group, if not present, would eliminate the demand for the organization (Carothers, personal meeting, September 1993)? When asking this question in post-secondary education it is believed that the primary customer is the student (Tuttle, 1994). To know the customer, in this case, the student, is a mandatory part of T.Q.M. (Coate, 1991). Brown and Koenig in a 1993 article expand the traditional definition of higher education’s customer from academic associations, administrators and peers and include students. In the higher education setting the customer is defined partially as students (Vazzana and Winter 1997).

Now that the customer of higher education has been defined it is essential to understand the role the customer plays in T.Q.M. The primary quality measure of T.Q.M. is based on the level of customer satisfaction with the product provided (Seymour, 1992).

Organizations need to produce data from which they may make informed decisions (Seymour, 1991). Customer needs may be identified through the use of customer surveys (Coate, 1991). This statement legitimizes the use of a survey in this

study based on Quality Function Deployment a proponent of T.Q.M. The widely accepted saying that you cannot manage what you do not measure only reinforces the importance of customer surveys. In addition, through the measuring process, insight into the obvious may be yielded, which often produces immediate improvements (Seymour, 1991).

A major proponent of T.Q.M. is that information is needed to make decisions and manage any organization. This thesis deals with the collecting of data so that students may make career decisions. In addition, schools may use the information gathered as a marketing tool.

Pragmatic Basis of the Study

Studies have discovered that students desire educators to acknowledge the comprehensive educational experience, not only elements such as specific courses (Brown & Koenig, 1993). Former customers emphasize the importance of alumni's post-graduate experiences (Brown & Koenig, 1993). Approximately 30% of the administrators of M.B.A. programs believe that questionnaires of alumni are the most effective method for grading their academic programs (Edwards & Brannen, 1990). The use of alumni and student satisfaction and employment surveys has provided useful insights pertaining to quality that were available through traditional channels (Ory & Parker, 1989).

Design and Methodology

This section contains research regarding the design and methodology of the thesis. It consists of four subsections: data collection methods, the Total Design Method, questionnaire design, and statistical software.

Data Collection Methods

It is necessary to select a means of data collection from the seven recognized data collecting methods: focus group, face-to-face interview, mail survey, telephone survey, fax survey, interactive telephone data collection, and electronic survey. Of the seven possible survey methods the mail survey is identified as the most proper method of collecting data. The mail survey is affordable in terms of time and money involved. Most respondents prefer paper and pencil mail surveys over electronic surveys (Tomsic, Hendel, & Matross, 2000). There has been a range of response rates from somewhat higher for mail surveys (Sheehan & McMillan, 1999) to substantially higher for mail surveys (Underwood, Kim, & Matier, 2000). For surveying graduates of a major university with a largely scattered population among most states and many countries the mail questionnaire offers the only viable option (Dillman, 1978). Further, mail surveys are a suitable means for achieving responses from individuals.

Total Design Method

Since the literature search indicated that the use of a mail survey is the most appropriate for this study one needs to determine the optimal approach. Given the small population of this study there is an increased emphasis on high response rates. As

identified in coursework from Rochester Institute of Technology the Total Design Method warrants first consideration. The use of Dillman's Total Design Method course of action produced an extraordinary rate of return (Cote, 1986). A ninety percent response rate is achievable employing Dillman's method (Brady, 1989). Strict adherence to the Total Design Method increases the response rates of mail surveys (Dillman, 1984). Response rates for mail surveys of general populations average seventy-four percent (Dillman, 1978). Due to the historical performance in terms of response rates, an ability to meet project goals, and the expertise available in terms of faculty and students; the Total Design Method has been selected as the approach by which the mail survey will be conducted.

Questionnaire Design

The intent of this section is not to lay down every detail of questionnaire design. It is important, however, to state the principles and guidelines with which this survey was designed. As stated earlier the Total Design Method will be adhered to. The general guidelines for the Total Design Method and specific guidelines are addressed due to its special impact on this study. In addition to Dillman's Total Design Method, writings from Frary, Hayes, and Labaw will be utilized.

The theoretical basis for the Total Design Method is that the process of a mail survey is a "social exchange," not an economic exchange (Dillman, 1978). Three items that must be accomplished to obtain the greatest survey response: reduce costs to their lowest level for those responding, maximize the benefits for responding, and establish

faith that those benefits will be delivered (Dillman, 1978). Further, the foundation of the Total Design Method is built upon providing a set of techniques that enhance each other to generate a maximum number and quality of responses (Dillman, 1978). The effect of adaptations to the Total Design Method is unknown (Dillman, 1978). Cost effectiveness needs to be part of the decision making process behind survey design (Dillman, 1978). Although not a major tenant of Dillman's Total Design Method but a very important part of questionnaire design is the handling of objectionable questions. The request for salary information is classified as an objectionable question (Dillman, 1978).

Specific guidelines to questionnaire design as applied to this thesis are discussed. The cover letter of the mail survey should be brief (Hayes, 1992). Three methods for improving the response rates to income questions are: give broad response categories in place of exact salary data, provide a context that diminishes their shock (Dillman, 1978), and place such questions at the end of the questionnaire (Frary, 1996). The questionnaire should be as succinct as possible (Frary, 1996) and appear relevant (Hayes, 1992). The response categories should be listed in a progressive fashion (Frary, 1996). Select suitable response category terms and logic (Frary, 1996). The most important objective for a questionnaire is to allow a respondent to "have his own way." The only method of allowing respondents to "have his own way" is through the use of an open-ended question (Labaw, 1980). In addition, an open-ended question that is written well can replace a few close-ended questions (Labaw, 1980). Further, open-ended questions allow alumni to select the quality standards (Brown & Koenig, 1993).

Motivations to Conduct the Study

Colleges need to make allowance for marketing strategies if they are to maintain viability in a more and more competitive marketplace (Rosen, Curran, & Greenlee 1998). As part of the informal marketing process schools should be concerned with the transmission of better service quality (Corbitt, 1998).

In delivering improved service quality schools should work to satisfy customer expectations. Even though the customer has been defined as the student, alumni are knowledgeable adjudicators due to the fact that the alumni have experienced the school's program and observed the postgraduate outcomes (Brown & Koenig, 1993). In addition, approximately thirty percent of academic program administrators reported that graduate surveys are the optimum method for evaluating academic programs (Edwards & Brannen, 1990).

The level of service quality is related directly and positively to the level of satisfaction of customers (B. Browne, Kaldenberg, W. Browne, & Brown). Meeting customer's expectations results in more satisfied customers (Fonvielle, 1997). Another benefit of satisfying students is a decreased dropout rate among those students enrolled in programs (Hatcher, Kryter, Prus, & Fitzgerald, 1992). This is especially important due to the low retention rates at post-secondary schools (DeCosmo, Heverly, & Parker, 1991). Due to the fact that alumni satisfaction is part of the criteria of the U.S. News and World Report's university rankings, institutes of higher education may upgrade their academic rankings and hence reputation by improving alumni satisfaction. Along with a better reputation come more applicants to the institute. Additionally, graduates with higher levels of satisfaction tend to give more charitable contributions to schools (Miller &

Casebeer, 1990). Word of mouth advertising is another reason to attempt to increase the level of satisfaction of students (Cornesky, 1992).

If Deming's philosophy is adopted then students, graduates, and employers have even greater reason to support the institution (Cornesky, 1992). Since the alignment of R.I.T.'s mission statement, historical tradition and the Department of F.H.T.M. objectives are career oriented then it is employment factors that should be measured and considered.

If universities and institutions understand the motivations of prospective students then they will be in a better position to meet such motivations. Meeting such motivations will give the school a competitive advantage and allow the school to attract more and higher qualified students (Harris Interactive, 2002).

Levels of Management

This study categorizes the various positions of its graduates into various managerial levels. The three levels of management are Top, Middle, and First-Line (Spears, 2000). Based on discussions with faculty, the top managers of are further broken down into high and top managers (Stockham, personal meeting, September 2002). In order to include all employees the last category created is nonmanagerial.

Summary

Subjects reviewed include; historical overview, nature of the study, theoretical basis of the study, pragmatic basis of the study, factors that associated with alumni

satisfaction, surveying methods, the Total Design Method, questionnaire design, statistical software, motivations to conduct the study, and levels of management.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Introduction

The researcher believes the administration and management of any business needs customer information in order to properly manage it. R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management is no different. This would lead one to the conclusion that the department needs to establish a database of customer information. In this section the methodology of establishing a database will be explained in detail. The methodology of the thesis study may be described in seven parts; ideological assumptions, procedural assumptions, procedures, setting of the study, study sample, period of data collection, and instrument.

Ideological Assumptions

The main ideological assumption is the existence of a need for information from graduates. This assumption stems from the common need by management of all businesses to have information in order to manage. One of the principle components of information is customer feedback. Without reliable pertinent information a manager is unable to effectively lead their business.

Procedural Assumptions

The procedural assumptions are developed from the literature review section found in chapter 2 of this thesis. Since all data-gathering methods have advantages and disadvantages it is the objective of the researcher to find the most appropriate means to

conduct a study. Overall no one data-gathering method is better than another. The specific circumstances of the study often dictate the method used. Dillman specifically cites the mail survey as the most appropriate means of gathering data from a university's alumni population. Thus, the data-gathering device used in this study is the mail questionnaire.

The mail questionnaire was chosen for a set of reasons. Mail questionnaires are less intrusive and expensive than telephone surveys. Further, mail surveys have a higher probability of reaching the respondent and a reduced chance for a socially undesirable bias to occur over telephone surveys. Mail questionnaires have high response rates when sent to a homogeneous group and may be conducted anonymously (Dillman, 1978). Anonymity is very critical since extremely private information pertaining to salary is being requested. In addition, length limitations do not limit the length of the mail survey and are less likely to suffer from interviewer distortion and subversion over telephone surveys (Dillman, 1978). Although data may be unreliable in any method, mail surveys have enhanced reliability due to the fact that a large percent of the population may be solicited. Such a high solicitation rate would be impossible with group or Individual interviews considering the geographical distribution of the population.

Various types of data were selected for distinct reasons. A combined approach was employed in order to solicit the optimum qualities of each data type thus improving the overall quality of the data. Quantitative research was selected for its' ability to be used statistically. Qualitative research was also chosen for its' ability to be replicated and

authenticated and add value to the study. Due to the limitations of the size of the small population under study the qualitative approach would generally be suitable. Further, the qualitative approach of questioning will give researchers, and eventually readers, a more complete picture of the perspective of the subjects of the study (Weiss 1994).

Procedures

Data will be gathered and evaluated for this study pertaining to hygiene factors affecting alumni satisfaction of R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management's graduate programs. Biographical and demographical information has been displayed through the use of graphs. Qualitative data is represented in narrative tables. Biographical and demographical information are integrated with qualitative data and satisfaction data and represented graphically. Quantitative data is represented in bar charts. Satisfaction and quantitative data are cross-tabulated and represented in tables.

The first step in the procedure is to determine the goals of the thesis. The goals set the tone and determine how the thesis will be carried out. In this case the major goal is to determine what hygiene factors effect the satisfaction of the graduates from Rochester Institute of Technology's Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management masters degree programs. In order to evaluate the hygiene factors contributing to satisfaction of alumni, previous studies must be consulted. A benchmark study was conducted to figure out how other area schools survey their alumni. Questions are derived from this and the goals of the thesis. The survey is then pre-tested to check for flaws. Surveys were issued to twelve graduate students from the department who were

then asked to complete the survey and report any recommendations. The following recommendations were identified; increase the number of lines provided to answer the qualitative questions, add a start date to the executive leader program question, use salary ranges not exact figures and use fill in the blanks not multiple choice for time to find employment and promotion questions. Flaws in the survey were then removed.

As stated earlier the surveying device used was the mail questionnaire. Included with the questionnaire will be a cover letter and a postage paid return envelope. The mail out date will be on the first Tuesday of a non-holiday week after the survey is completed and the mailings are ready. This allows for letters to be received in the same week as they were mailed out, even if they need to be forwarded. In addition, sending mail out on Tuesday does not add to the buildup of mail from over the weekend to be handled on Monday. The follow-up schedule was based on the number of weeks following the first mailing. At week one a postcard was sent to everyone. The card acts as a thank you for those that have responded and as a reminder for those who have not. On the third week a new letter similar to the first cover letter and another questionnaire will be mailed to non-respondents. The new cover letter was shorter than the first and mentioned that their questionnaire had not yet been received, followed by a request for its return. At seven weeks the final mailing was sent certified mail. Sending the letter certified underscored it's important. In addition to the cover letter another questionnaire was enclosed. Respondents were given various ranges from which they may have chosen an appropriate response. The respondents were asked for their starting and current salaries.

Questionnaires were coded for such information as degree type, program, program type, and country of origin and graduation date.

Once the surveys had been returned the information was collected and entered into a database. Information was then analyzed to find trends. Biographical and demographical information regarding time to find employment, employment status, employment within the related field of study, current salary, nationality, promotability, gender, age, field of study, current salary, nationality, promotability, gender, age and field of study and satisfaction was compared with satisfaction factors.

The satisfaction rate of graduates with R.I.T. and its Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management was presented. Data pertaining to positive and needs improvement attributes was analyzed for opportunity areas.

Statistical software has been used to create graphs to present the descriptive data. After analysis, data has been extracted and organized in a more useful manor. To organize data, narrative tables have been established for the qualitative data. Narratives have been sorted into groups based on topic similarity.

In addition, the level of satisfaction of graduates with Rochester Institute of Technology has been calculated. Alumni were given a scenario based on if they could transcend time and make their decision over to attend R.I.T.'s F.H.T.M. graduate programs. Would alumni choose to attend R.I.T.'s graduate programs from the

department of F.H.T.M.? The level of satisfaction is based on the percent of those alumni who would choose to attend R.I.T.'s graduate programs from the department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management. Strong and weak areas of R.I.T. have been identified.

Setting of the Study

This study was a mail survey developed in October and November 1997. The three repetitive surveys were sent in December 1997, January 1998, and February 1998. In addition, a reminder postcard was mailed in December 1997. The questionnaire was mailed to all of the graduates from R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management masters' degree program with a known address. This included 46 states and 17 countries. Surveys were mailed from and returned to R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management. Surveys were returned from December 1997 to March 1998. Tabulation and analysis of the data was made in April and May of 1998.

The Study Sample

The population of this study was 196. It included all graduates from R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management masters degree programs who had an updated address with the Alumni Affairs Office. This includes males and females from the inception of the program in 1987 to December 1997. The choice of the population was determined by the thesis objective; to establish a database on R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management master's degree graduates. Thus, using R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management master's degree program would be representative.

The sample of this study was 101. The sample was determined by the responses themselves. All completed and returned surveys were included. This procedure was used to maximize the total number of responses included. A large number of responses were needed to insure reliability given the small population.

A return rate of 51.5 percent was achieved for this study. Given the population size of 196 and the sample size of 101 and accepting a confidence level of 95 percent the confidence interval is 6.8. A confidence interval of 6.8 makes it difficult to draw extremely reliable conclusions regarding this study.

Period of Data Collection

Data was collected from December 1997 to March 1998. The responses were based on the period the respondent attended R.I.T. The results are based on data from 1987 to December 1997.

Instrument

The design of the questionnaire was started in October 1997 and completed in November 1997. Designing the questionnaire took place in four distinct phases. Phase I consisted of writing the questions. The second phase constructed the mail questionnaire. The next phase of the survey design dealt with writing a cover letter. Finally in the fourth phase the survey was pretested. The length of the questionnaire was chosen to be short (between fifteen and twenty-five questions.) Due to the need for a high response rate a

brief questionnaire was chosen. Typically the longer the questionnaire, the lower the response rate.

Two types of questions were used in the survey. The first type of question was the close-ended question. It was chosen if most of the various ways of responding to the question were anticipated. The other type of question was the open-ended question. It was chosen because open-ended questions allow respondents to express themselves freely. A large area for answers was given in the open-ended questions. This would communicate the importance of these questions to the respondent meanwhile allowing them all the space they would need to express freely.

There are three steps to writing the questions. First, determine what information is being sought. Next, choose the question's structure. Last, proof the questions. The information being sought fell into either demographic or narrative categories. The criteria for developing and writing the questions were derived from industry standard, Brown and Koenig's Study and the R.I.T.'s 1997 Alumni Study. The demographically oriented questions were based on industry generally accepted practices and R.I.T.'s 1997 Alumni Study. Brown and Koenig outlined the impact of career oriented data on alumni satisfaction. This thesis parallels a mail survey conducted by R.I.T. in 1997. The institute's study was based on the alumni's supposition regarding their decision to attend R.I.T. again.

Creswell recommends the use of a single, overarching question to guide the study and several sub-questions, which go into greater detail. Devising relevant and provocative questions is vital to the success of the project and deserves significant attention from the researcher. The central question, according to Creswell, should be as broad as possible (Creswell 1998: 99). The central question of this study is question four. The sub-questions should obviously be more specific and should take the form of either topical questions or issue questions designed to extract as much information as possible from the informants (Creswell 1998). The sub-questions of this study are questions five, six, and seven.

The beginning question asks graduates about their educational experience since R.I.T.: “Have you received another degree since attending R.I.T.?” The respondent is asked to circle the number relating to their answer; “1 Yes” or “2 No”. If “Yes” was selected the respondent was instructed to specify the type of degree and the major field of study.

Since the researchers approach was identified in the literature review, as the Total Design Method the researcher will adhere as closely as possible to that method. The extended basis for this question is the 1997 R.I.T. Alumni Study. The primary purpose of this question was to discover if the graduates have had any educational achievements since R.I.T. The secondary purpose was to get all the respondents involved in the survey. In a mail questionnaire if the first question does not apply to the respondent often they assume the survey does not apply to themselves. The respondent then fails to complete

the survey. In addition, the initial presence of easy questions (Q-1 to Q-3) reduces fears of a time-consuming questionnaire.

The second question inquires, “Are you currently in another educational program?” Five possible responses are listed as follows; “1 Graduate School Full-Time”, “2 Graduate School Part-Time”, “3 Not Attending School”, “4 Professional School (e.g. Law, Medicine, etc.)”, and “5 Other (Please Specify)”. Instructions to “Circle number” are given. This question was included in the survey to explain potential voids in employment that would be revealed in question three.

Question three asks, “What is your current employment status?” The following four choices were listed; “1 Employed Full-Time”, “2 Employed Part-Time”, “3 Unemployed and Seeking Employment”, and “4 Unemployed and Not Seeking Employment”. This will allow for the evaluation of the program based on the criteria of employment post graduation.

The next question asks, “If you had the chance to make the decision again would you choose to attend F.H.T.M. masters program at R.I.T.?” A yes or no response is offered. If the respondent chooses no they are requested to explain their answer. This question was created as the litmus test to determine if the graduates were satisfied with their experiences at F.H.T.M. masters program at R.I.T. and in the alumni’s estimation what may have caused any to be dissatisfied. Additionally question four was selected so

this study could be compared with other alumni satisfaction studies especially the 1997 R.I.T. Alumni Study.

Question five asks, “In regards to the academic program (Courses, Curriculum, Thesis, Project.) What benefited you the most? Why?” This question gives feedback on what the program is doing right based on the experiences and estimations of alumni since graduation. Courses, curriculum, thesis, and project were added to the question to guide but not limit respondents.

The sixth question inquires, “What change(s) would you recommend to the Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management concerning the academic program (Courses, Curriculum, Thesis, Project?)” This question indicates potential weak areas of the program in estimation by the alumni.

Question seven asks, “Are there any other area(s) outside of the academic program (Student life, Housing) that you feel R.I.T. could improve on? What are these areas? How could they be improved?” This question allows respondents more freedom than the previous two questions to air any grievances. Again suggested areas were listed but not limited student life and housing. Additionally the question allows respondents to give their insights on how to correct the problem.

The eighth question asks, “What type of program were you enrolled at R.I.T.?” Three choices for answers are offered as follows; “1 Executive Leader Format (Starting

in 1990)", "2 Traditional Format / Full-Time", and "3 Traditional Format / Part-Time". This question was created to offer some demographic information.

The subsequent question surveys, "What type of student were you?" The three alternatives were; "1 International", "2 US Citizen ", or "3 Canadian Citizen". This question is a source of more demographic information.

Question ten asks, "What is your sex?" Two options are given; "1 Female" or "2 Male". This question is requesting more demographic information.

Question eleven is another demographically oriented question. The eleventh question asks, "How old are you?" Due to the relative sensitivity of this question it was placed toward the end of the survey. In addition, the respondent is offered a range of choices instead having to give their exact age. The ranges were utilized in order to diffuse the potential sensitivity of this inquiry. The ranges offered were; "1 Under 25 years", "2 25-34 years", "3 35-44 years", "4 45-54 years", or "5 Over 54 years".

Question twelve asks, "Since your graduation from R.I.T. have you been employed in a job related to your major field of study?" There was a choice of five answers; "1 Yes", "2 No, I wanted to change fields", "3 No, I could not find a job in my field", "4 No, I have not found employment", and "5 No, Other (Please Specify)". Because the researcher stated in the literature review that the 1997 R.I.T. Alumni Study would form a basis for this study then employment within your major field of study

needed to be addressed. This question was included as an indicator of job placement levels within the major field of study.

Question thirteen asks, “How long did it take you to obtain employment after graduation?” This question tests the speed of placement of graduates. Question thirteen is based on the association of career outcomes and alumni satisfaction that was revealed in the literature review.

Question fourteen inquires, “What is/was your latest title held at your most recent job? The purpose of this question was to determine what graduates have aspired to. This information would be used to categorize employees further into demographic groups based on managerial levels.

The next question asks, “Have you received a promotion?” This question makes an attempt at discovering how quickly a graduate receives a promotion. Additionally question fifteen seeks to discover any association between promotions and satisfaction. Question fifteen is based on the association of career outcomes and alumni satisfaction that was revealed in the literature review.

The last two questions examine the starting and current salary of alumni. The answers were offered in ranges due to the high sensitivity of the information being requested. Further the sensitive nature of the questions requires that these questions to be placed last. The first of these two questions asks, “What was your starting gross annual

income in US dollars?” The last question asks, “What is your current gross annual income in US dollars?” These questions are used to discover associations between satisfaction and income that were identified in the literature review.

At the bottom of the last page there is a statement that reads, “The information you provided is greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of the results please write your name and address on the back of the return envelope (Not on the questionnaire itself.) We will insure that you receive it.” This statement thanks the respondent for the information and gives instructions on how to receive an abstract of the study. Dillman identified this as an essential element to any mail questionnaire.

Statistical Software

The use of the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was chosen for four reasons. First, the software is available at the computer lab for the Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management. Next, the expertise of the members of the thesis committee lies in the use of the SPSS. Third, a historical precedent was established by Brown and Koenig who employed the use of SPSS with success in their alumni satisfaction study (1993). Last, a literature based search reveals that SPSS is the “Mercedes” of statistical software and is a delight to work with (Lasky, 2000).

Summary

In this chapter ideological and theoretical assumptions, procedures, the setting, sample, period of data collection, and the instrument are examined. The procedure for

collecting information consisted of a mail survey and a reminder postcard using the Total Design Method. Two hundred surveys were initially mailed out in December 1997 to the alumni of R.I.T's graduate programs from the department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management with 102 responses. The subsequent chapter will show the outcome of the statistical analysis of the information gathered from the mail survey.

Chapter 4 – Analysis: Results and Findings

Introduction

The results and findings of this study may be divided into three separate sections. These include descriptive statistics, qualitative information and explanation, and a comparison of the expected and actual results of this study. The findings are consequently arranged accordingly.

Descriptive Statistics

In the following section the researcher will examine the data reported from 101 (51.5%) respondents to the mail survey (Exhibit 1) of 196 alumni from the graduate programs of the Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management conducted in December 1997 to February 1998. First, the researcher will explain the grouping or clustering of the responses to the questions posed in the survey. The following section presents the tabulated data for questions 1 to 4 and 8 to 17 from the survey in graphic form. In addition, the coded survey data of program type and the year of graduation is tabulated and presented in graphic form. This information is tabulated by frequency and presented in percent of total responses. Finally, the response rate is cross-tabulated with the year of graduation group.

The clustering of data is executed in order to clarify the results of the questionnaire and to allow the results to be statistically analyzed. The areas that are collapsed are the educational status, years of graduation, nationality of student, type of program, location post graduation, and time to find employment, categories of

employment, and salary. Educational status is compressed through the combination of the graduate full-time and graduate part-time responses. The years of graduation are collapsed into three separate categories early (1988 to 1991), middle (1992 to 1994), and late (1995 to 1997). Previously the nationalities of alumni were divided into three groups, United States citizen, Canadian, and international. Canadian and international were combined leaving two categories, United States citizen and international. The responses to the type of program as regards to traditional or executive leader formats were collapsed into the following three categories; executive leader, traditional part-time, and traditional full-time. Location of alumni post graduation was grouped first by country, with the United States being subdivided into States. Next, location was collapsed from countries to international. States of the United States were collapsed into regions. The United States were divided into the following regions, Northeast, South, Midwest, and West. The amount of time for alumni to obtain post-graduation employment was clustered into two categories. These two categories were six months or less and over six months. The categories for employment were established as top management, high management, middle management, line management, and non managerial. Top managers are represented by the titles of owner or president. Meanwhile, high managers are represented by the titles of director, provost, division head, or area manager. Middle managers are represented by the titles of general manager, administrative manager, manager, senior manager, city planner, or senior food service director. Line managers are represented by the titles of assistant manager, supervisor, project leader, assistant general manager, project manager, dining room manager, front office manager, team leader, or training manager. Non-managerial employees are represented by the titles of chef, sales representative, professor, or project

administrator. Finally, salaries were collapsed. Starting salary was collapsed to less than \$30,000 or \$30,000 and greater. Current salary was collapsed to less than \$35,000 or \$35,000 and greater.

Established on the findings of this mail questionnaire the mode for graduates who have not earned another degree were 95 (94.1%), those not attending another program were 79 (78.2%), those employed full-time were 84 (83.2%), those would choose R.I.T. again were 90 (89.1%), those traditional program full-time were 56 (55.4%), those male were 55 (54.5%), those of or between the ages 25 and 34 were 51 (50.5%), those from 1996 year of graduation were 21 (20.8%), and those in a hospitality major were 84 (83.2%). The nationality and location of graduates is also considered. Pre graduation most graduates were from the United States 84 (83.2%). Post graduation most alumni were located in the United States 90 (89.1%) in the Northeastern region 60 (58.4%). In regards to employment most often the alumni's starting income was \$40,000 or greater 27 (26.7%), their current income \$45,000 or greater 49 (48.5%), already employed before graduation 39 (38.6%) or employed within one to two months 23 (22.8%) and have worked in a related field 86 (85.1%). As regards to career impact alumni have received a promotion 48 (47.5%), most often promoted from seven to twelve months 20 (19.8%), and are non-managerial 43 (42.6%) or high level of management 21 (20.8%).

Figure 1: Question-1 of Survey

“Have you received another degree since attending R.I.T.?”

Another Degree Since Attending R.I.T.

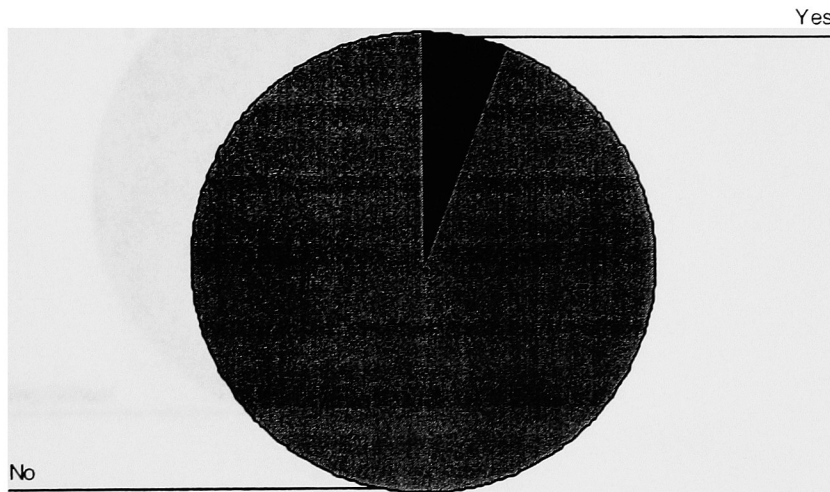
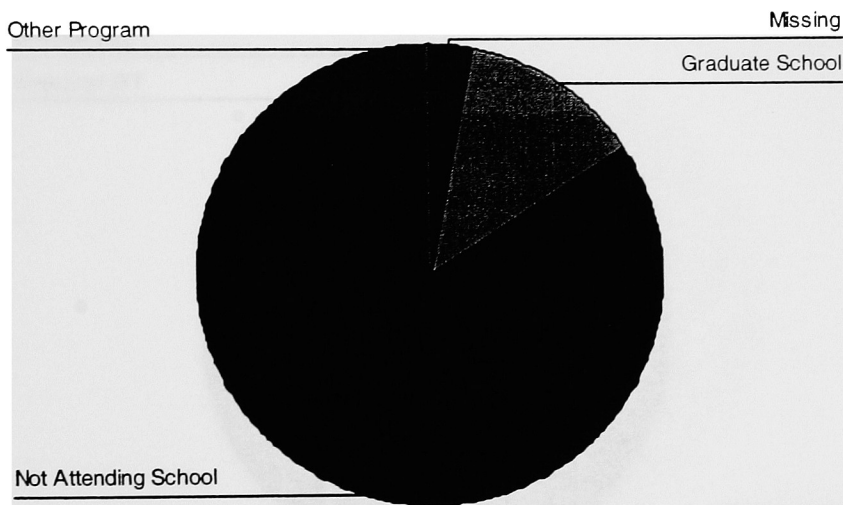


Figure 2: Question-2 of the Survey

“Are you currently in another educational program?”

Enrollment Status

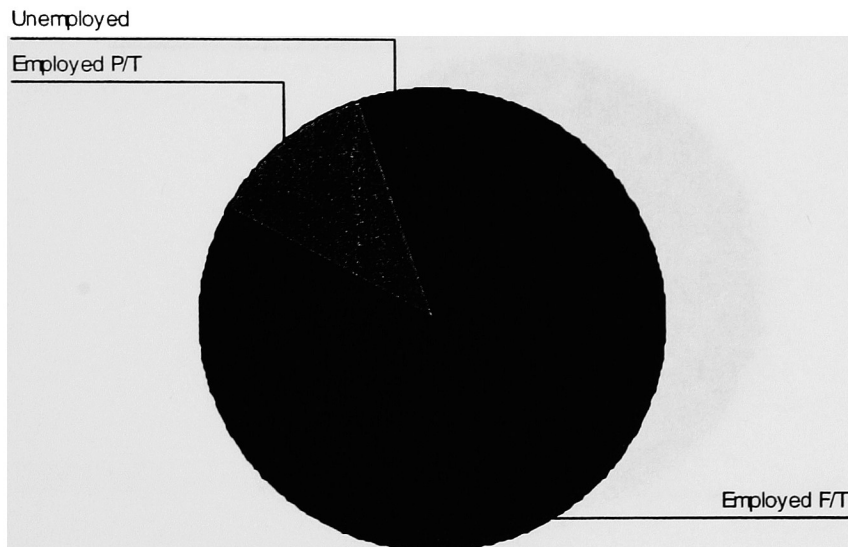


Missing = Respondent Did Not Answer

Figure 3: Question-3 of the Survey

“What is your current employment status?”

Employment Status



P/T = Part-Time

F/T = Full-Time

Figure 4: Question-4 of the Survey

“If you had the chance to make the decision would you choose R.I.T.?”

Choose R.I.T. Again

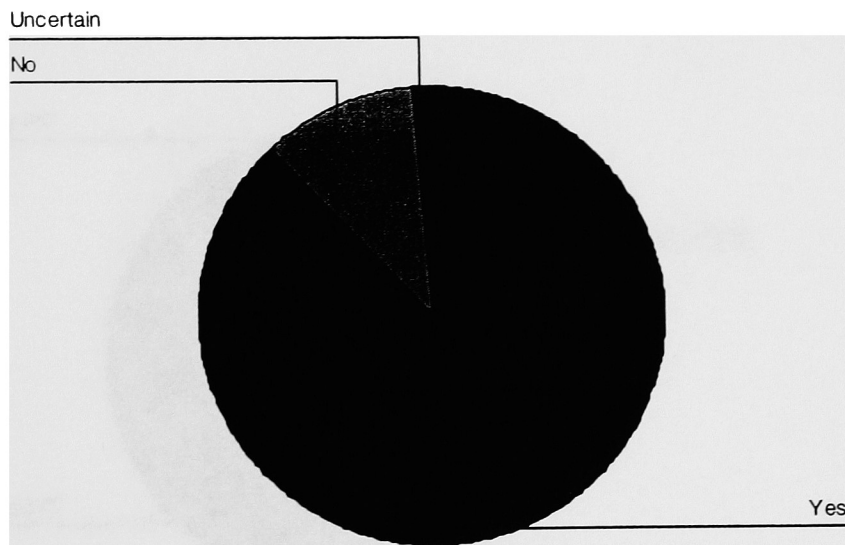
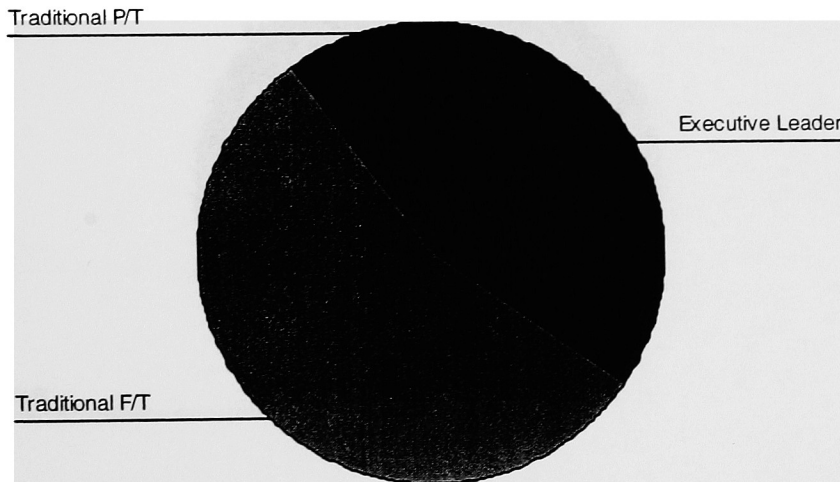


Figure 5: Question-8 of the Survey

“What type of program were you enrolled in at R.I.T?”

Program Format



P/T = Part-Time

F/T = Full-Time

Figure 6: Question-9 of the Survey

“What type of student were you?”

Student Type

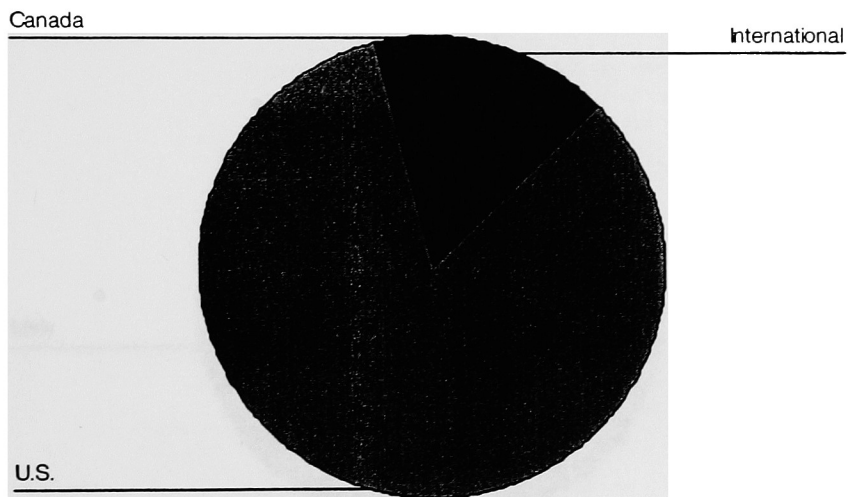
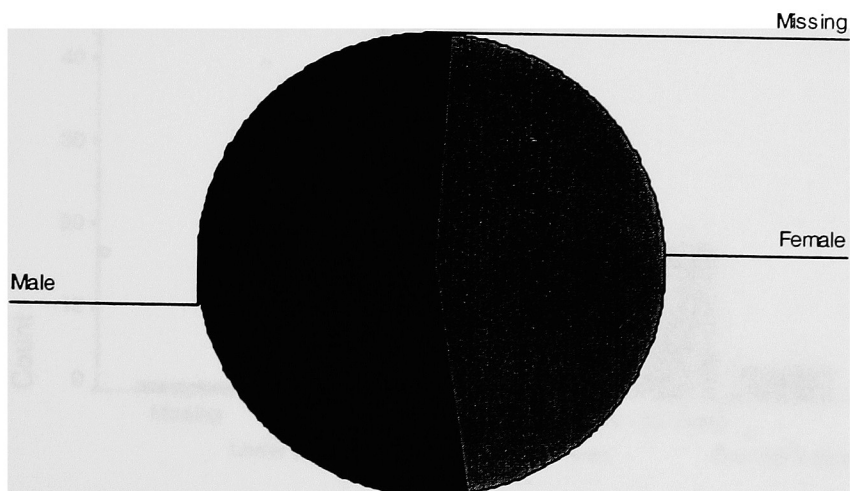


Figure 7: Question-10 of the Survey

“What is your sex?”

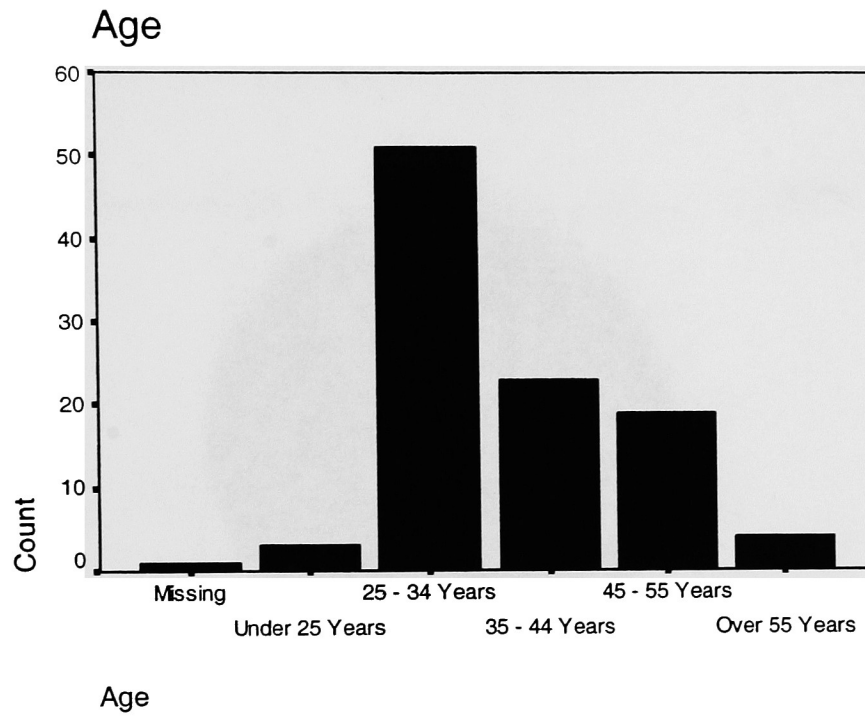
Gender



Missing = Respondent Did Not Answer

Figure 8: Question-11 of the Survey

“How old are you?”

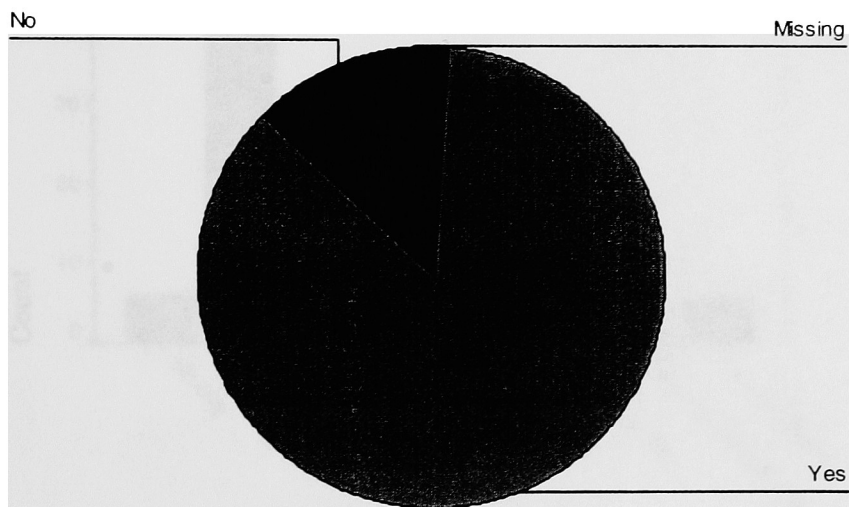


Missing = Respondent Did Not Answer

Figure 9: Question-12 of the Survey

“Since your graduation from R.I.T. have you been employed in a job related to your major field of study?”

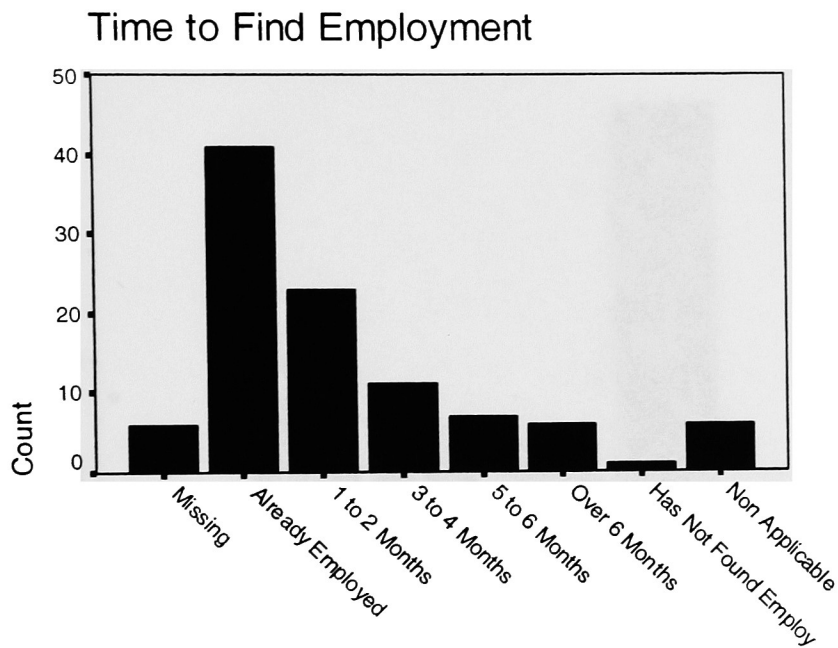
Related Employment



Missing = Respondent Did Not Answer

Figure 10: Question-13 of the Survey

“How long did it take you to obtain employment after graduation?”



Time To Find Employment

Missing = Respondent Did Not Answer

Non Applicable = Respondent's Answer Written

Figure 11: Question-14

“What is your latest title held at your most recent position?”

The researcher then categorized the positions by the following groups:

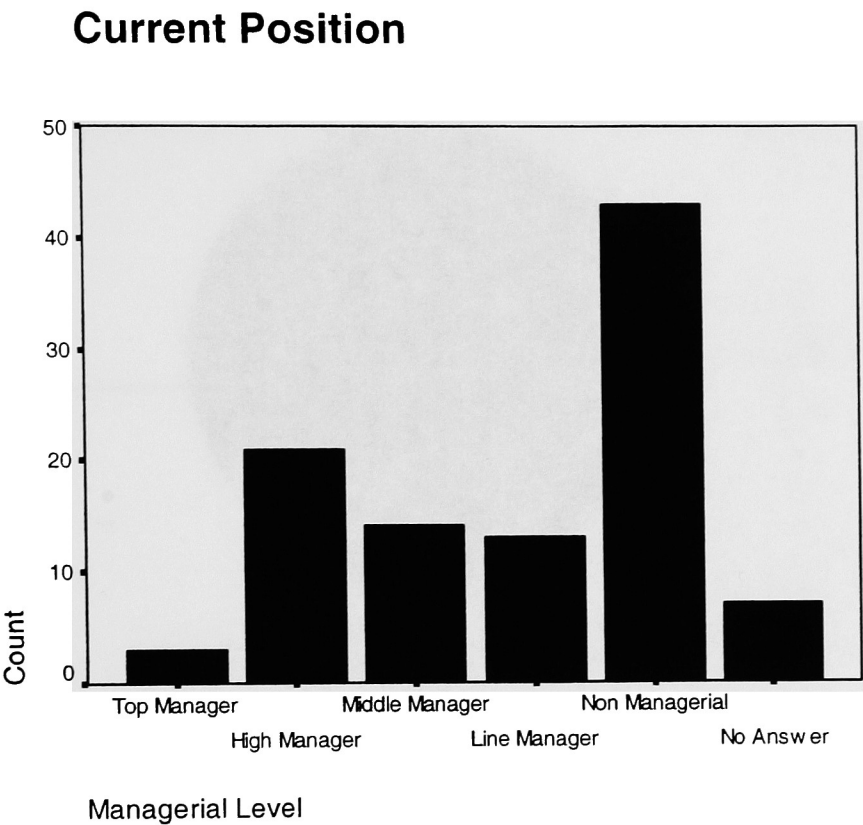
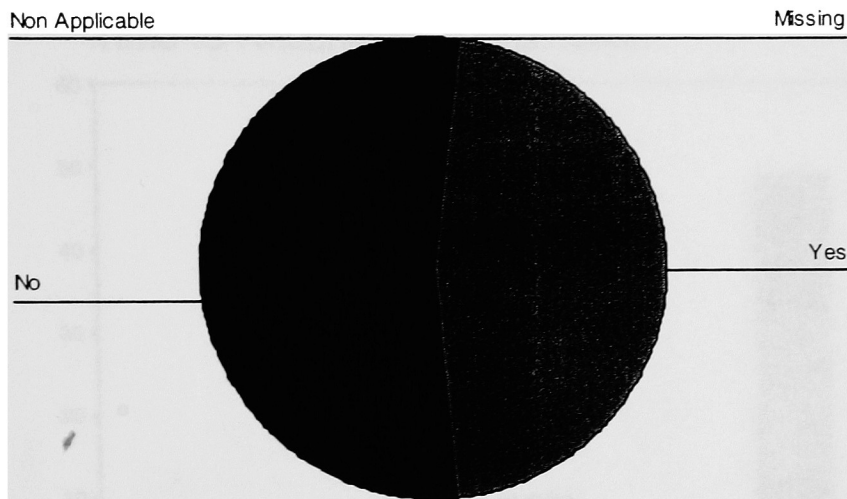


Figure 12: Question-15 Part I of the Survey

“Have you received a promotion?”

Received Promotion

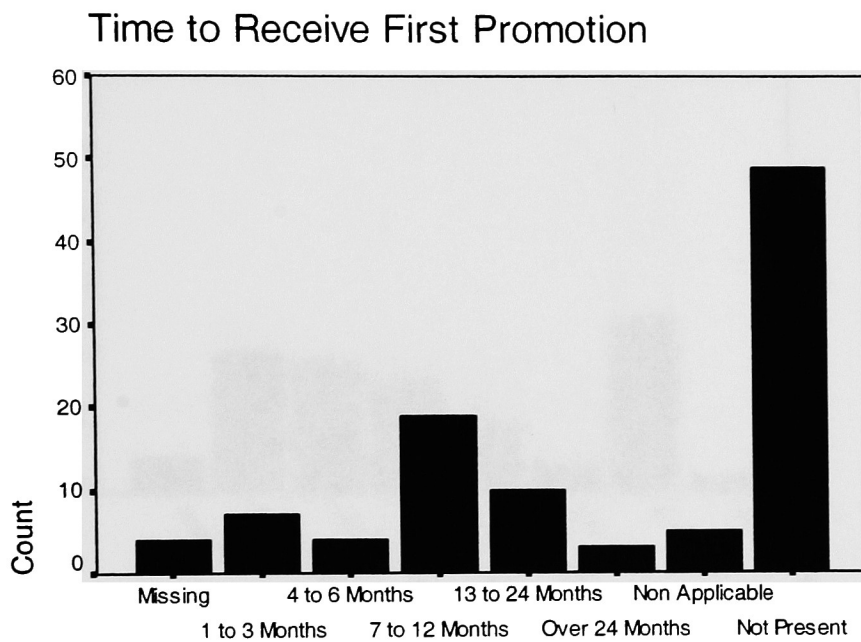


Missing = Respondent Did Not Answer

Non Applicable = Respondent's Answer Written

Figure 13: Question-15 Part II of the Survey

Please Specify How Long After Graduation You Received a Promotion



Time To Receive First Promotion

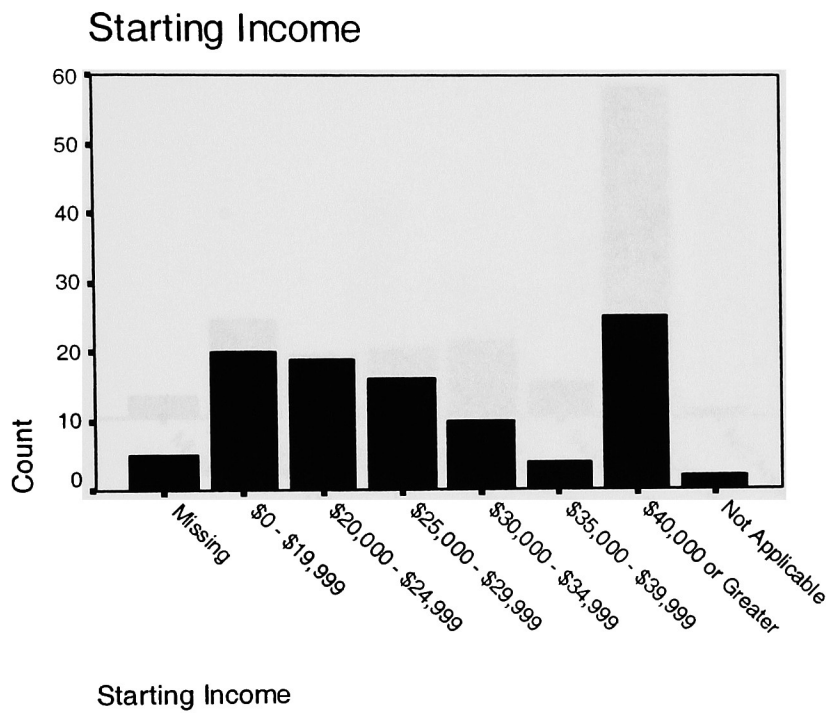
Missing = Respondent Did Not Answer Although Has Received a Promotion

Non Applicable = Respondent's Answer Written

Not Present = Respondent Has Not Received A Promotion

Figure 14: Question-16 of the Survey

“What was your starting gross annual income in US dollars?”

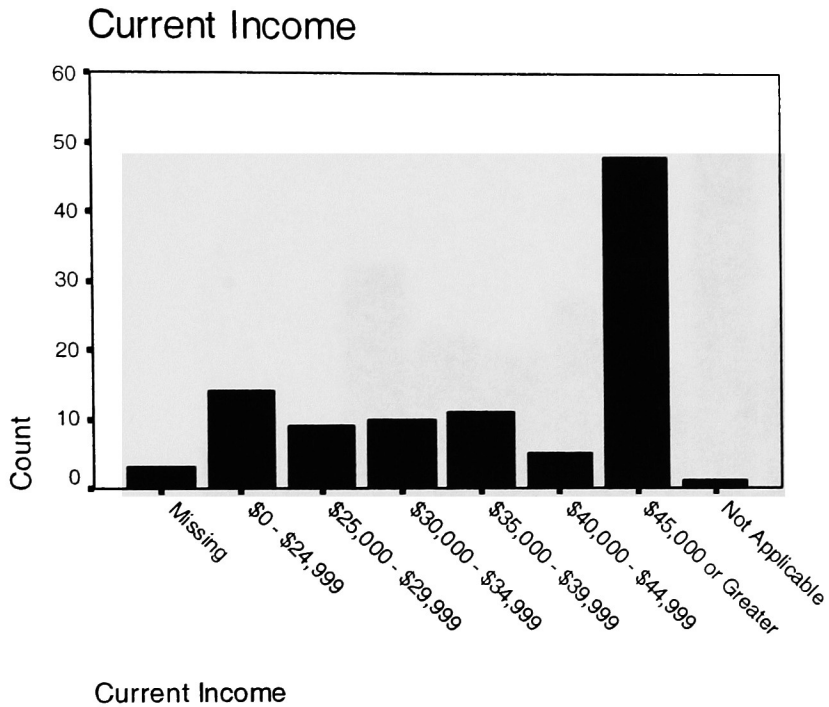


Missing = Respondent Did Not Answer

Non Applicable = Respondent's Answer Written

Figure 15: Question-17 of the Survey

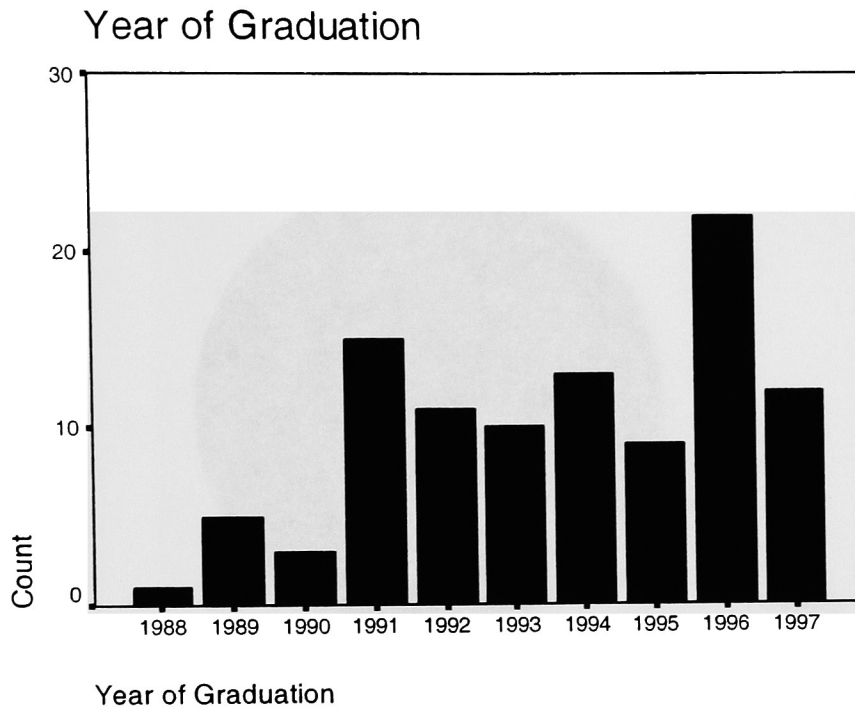
“What is your current annual income in US dollars?”



Missing = Respondent Did Not Answer

Non Applicable = Respondent's Answer Written

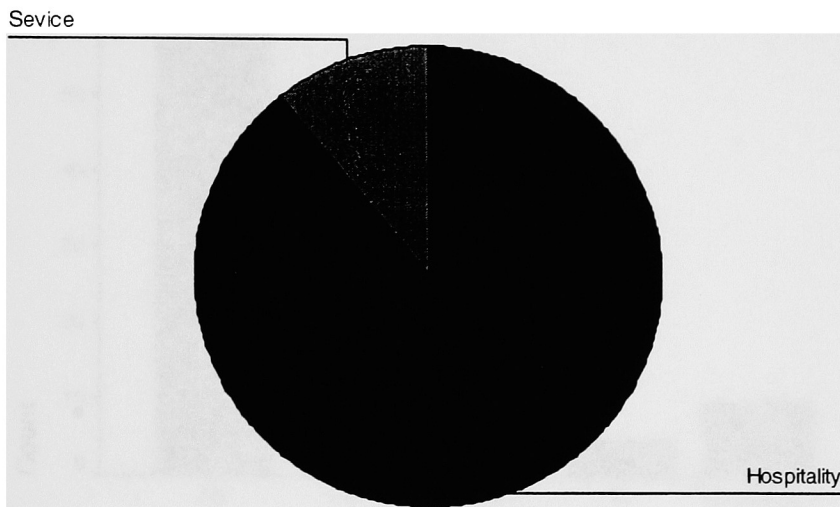
Figure 16: Respondents by Year of Graduation



Data gathered from the coding of the mail questionnaire.

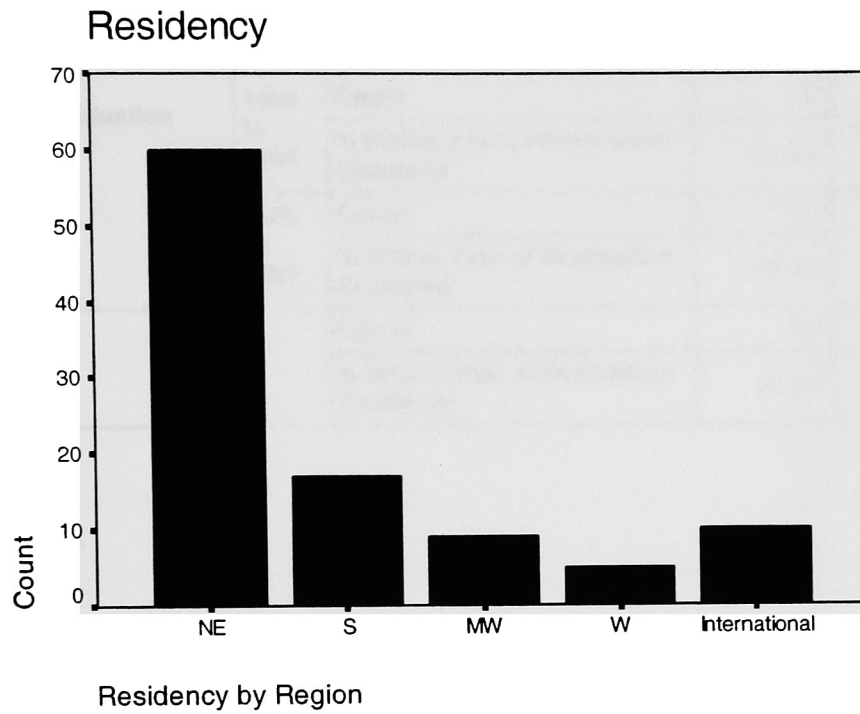
Figure 17: Respondents Major Field of Study

Major Field of Study



Data gathered from the coding of the mail questionnaire.

Figure 18: Residency by Region



Data gathered from the coding of the mail questionnaire.

Table 1: Year of Graduation (Clustered) * Response Cross tabulation

Table: Year of Graduation (Clustered) * Response Cross tabulation					
			Response		Total
			Response	Nonresponse	
Year of Graduation Clustered	1988 to 1991	Count	23	14	37
		% Within Year of Graduation Clustered	62.2%	37.8%	100.0%
	1992 to 1994	Count	36	44	80
		% Within Year of Graduation Clustered	45.0%	55.0%	100.0%
	1995 to 1997	Count	44	35	79
		% Within Year of Graduation Clustered	55.7%	44.3%	100.0%
Total		Count	103	93	196
		% Within Year of Graduation Clustered	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%

Qualitative Data

In this section the researcher will define the categories of the qualitative data and provide a comparison of satisfied alumni and dissatisfied alumni. This qualitative data was collected from questions 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the alumni survey. Question 5 represents areas of satisfaction. Questions 4, 6, and 7 represent areas of dissatisfaction. The qualitative data categories will be defined through a listing of the exact comments of the respondents. Comments will be organized by rate of occurrence (from most to least occurring) into two categories: satisfied alumni and dissatisfied alumni. In addition, the average number of comments to each question for the satisfied and dissatisfied groups will be calculated and the number of non-responses accumulated.

The first task of the researcher for this installment of the thesis is to define the categories of the qualitative data. Data will be grouped by the question number into descriptive categories. The exact comments of the alumni will be listed for each category.

Table 2: Question-4 of the Survey

Comments of Unsatisfied Alumni

If you had the chance to make the decision again would you choose to attend R.I.T.? Explanations to “no” responses were placed into five categories as follows. No allowance for an explanation was given to those who answered “yes.”

Category	Comments
Faculty/Support	<p>The number of faculty and professors should be increased.</p> <p>The program did not deliver on what it promised i.e. post-grad support. I've found more assistance through my Cornell contacts.</p>
Value	<p>Too expensive.</p> <p>I would have benefited more from an M.B.A.</p> <p>I wouldn't come back to R.I.T. for the same program. My expectations about R.I.T. were much more than I met.</p> <p>The program did not deliver on what it promised i.e. degree recognition.</p> <p>The resources in R.I.T. are limited.</p>
Career	<p>Not currently in position related to degree.</p> <p>The degree doesn't sell well in Rochester, sorry to tell you but it is true. I know I am educated and I believe in myself, but I have yet to see the benefit of R.I.T on my resume.</p> <p>To attract new graduate students I was informed that master's degree would be marketable to corporate positions in hotel industry, and through R.I.T. placement that matches could/would occur. Nothing could be further from the truth. Most hotel corporations are interested in MBA's and the graduate degree is no more use professionally than a 4-year degree. R.I.T. has offered no placement services.</p> <p>The program did not deliver what it promised i.e. fast-track positions.</p>

Question-4 (continued)

Category	Comments
Curriculum	<p>Without PHD program.</p> <p>Change the name of the degree to Service Management.</p> <p>In hindsight, from its inception to present, the program was scattered and weak in focus.</p> <p>Would have looked for a more research oriented school and program.</p> <p>The courses offered are so few and not variable and not specific to the Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management.</p> <p>The focus was not enough on tourism, but more service. Service is a good focus, but my goal was to get into tourism.</p>
Geographic	<p>I want to be in different city with different city life and environment, preferably in the West or Mid-West.</p>

Table 3: Question-5 of the Survey

Comments of What Academically Benefited Alumni Most

In regards to the academic program (Courses, Curriculum, Thesis, Project.) What benefited you most? Why? Responses were grouped into the following eleven categories, preceded by the actual comments.

Category	Comment
Courses	<p>The course in quality has benefited me the most. These courses have been used to focus my career. I am now teaching Quality Service.</p> <p>(I'm not sure on the title of the course) – “Systematic Approaching” Courses because they all help me obtain a very new concept of service. That is customers don't need to come first anymore, but our employees... How are you going to raise the level of customers' satisfaction? Something along that line.</p> <p>I really liked the “training the trainer” course because I have used some of its formats for lectures and classes. Thanks.</p> <p>Dr. Marecki's Service Management Course was of the greatest benefit. I use the knowledge gained on a daily basis.</p> <p>Courses. (<i>5 responses</i>)</p> <p>Jim Jacob's classes. I like some of the courses too, like those elective [exhibition, meeting planning, etc.]</p> <p>Dr. Marecki's class on quality.</p> <p>Courses – in Total Quality Management – practice in current managerial issues.</p> <p>Graduate degree courses gave me the maturity and ability to see “the big picture.” Found what I learned at that level very applicable.</p> <p>Service and Organization Studies.</p> <p>Taking other specialty courses other than food related. This presented a broader perspective of the industry. I was exposed to a very good balance of courses related to hospitality. I would be selfish in asking for more food related courses. I appreciated the exposure to other specialties.</p> <p>Coursework gave me much enhanced perspective on service industries, despite working in service industry for my entire career.</p>

Question-5 (continued)

Category	Comment
Courses (continued)	<p>I was able to adapt coursework with my own work, which ultimately benefited me because I was working at the same time. I don't know if all courses are beneficial to students not yet in the workplace, but they were to me.</p> <p>The "hands on" courses.</p> <p>Courses – updated management skills and current methods.</p> <p>Courses dealing with Service Management.</p> <p>Courses content pertinent to my job and career.</p> <p>Well balanced courses.</p> <p>The course work helped me with developing guidelines and decision-making framework.</p> <p>The courses gave me more insights into the hotel field. At least I see most of the things I did in class as I work.</p> <p>Courses – they helped me gain a stronger threshold of the industry. What it is about, and what areas I might want to pursue in the future.</p> <p>The courses also had a lot of hands on practical information, which was helpful.</p> <p>Service Management Courses.</p> <p>Courses were up to date. Information acquired related to real life situations.</p> <p>Courses – The management classes that I attended helped me understand upper and middle managers and how to empower and motivate them.</p> <p>General Service Management Courses – Teams, Systems, Strategic Management in particular. They reach beyond "hospitality" into many, many more applicable situations.</p> <p>Finally, the specific Convention/Meeting Courses showed me a new, more professional way to view that specific aspect of the hospitality industry; the traditional view was later proved to me to be very unprofessional!</p> <p>The courses were pertinent.</p> <p>Courses were extremely relevant and provided current insights into the field – but most helpful was the classes held off-campus.</p> <p>Courses, particularly those with practical application and focus.</p>

Question-5 (continued)

Category	Comment
Thesis/Project/Research	<p>What I learned most was from my project. Although it was pretty hard during data collection, it made me learn and know more about the industry especially something I might never learn from current texts or publications.</p> <p>Thesis and Project – prepared me for writing/doing project at work.</p> <p>Project.</p> <p>Thesis was the most useful as it related closely to my work and has helped to establish me in the field.</p> <p>The core service and leadership courses.</p> <p>Marketing and service management - Both used extensively in courses I am currently teaching.</p> <p>And the thesis, gave practical application of the year's coursework.</p> <p>Thesis – learning to perform research.</p> <p>Research component of the thesis.</p> <p>Thesis. (2 <i>responses</i>)</p> <p>Projects/Thesis – Practical Application of New Skills.</p> <p>The thesis project was the most beneficial since I was able to do the research at my work location. It explained the practical application of a research project based on classroom theory.</p> <p>Thesis was applicable to work situation.</p> <p>Research for thesis.</p> <p>Thesis project – opened doors where employed, to take on greater responsibilities.</p> <p>Research.</p> <p>The project reduced the “ivory tower theoretical” to the practical from which I was better able to spin off a resume and pursue a job in the field – which in itself proved disappointing. The degree had less weight than a B.A./B.S. Prospective employers either didn't recognize/care about the advanced degree or were threatened by the additional credentials I held!</p> <p>Thesis – Most closely connected to my current job.</p> <p>Project – It allowed me to experience a “real world” problem and statistically analyze it for the benefit of others.</p>

Question-5 (continued)

Category	Comment
<p>Thesis/Project/ Research (Continued)</p>	<p>The projects we worked on gave me a sense of how concepts would apply outside the classroom.</p> <p>Project – synthesis of overall coursework and work life experience.</p> <p>Thesis – good practice for a dissertation.</p> <p>The thesis project helped me in understanding the research process and helped me understand approach to my doctoral research agendas.</p> <p>Thesis – Utilization of course content and curriculum to produce a thesis related to outcomes from total program.</p> <p>I enjoyed my thesis work.</p> <p>Thesis – Taught Research.</p> <p>Thesis and research projects enabled me to do research in doctorate program.</p> <p>Thesis – Preparation for Dissertation; Literature Searches.</p> <p>Thesis with Quaker Oats (work experience)</p> <p>The thesis. Mine was in marketing, specifically, a county in N.Y. My thesis got me my first marketing job at Disney. I'm now an International Director of Marketing for a themed restaurant based out of Orlando. The money is great and I really enjoy my job. It's all thanks to my research and writing of my thesis.</p> <p>The thesis was a great learning experience.</p> <p>Thesis Project – it allowed me to analyze, implement and market internal and external customer needs to meet business objectives.</p> <p>Thesis due to contacts made.</p> <p>Projects. Hands on learning is much more beneficial. It is hard to learn from just reading case studies.</p> <p>Thesis – helped me see the advantage of academic research.</p> <p>Thesis was a good experience too.</p>

Question-5 (continued)

Category	Comment
Curriculum	<p>Current Curriculum Service Quality!!</p> <p>The whole package was beneficial. The delivery time frame was suitable. The curriculum was designed well taking into consideration the skills and knowledge levels of participants.</p> <p>Curriculum because they all help me obtain a very new concept of service. That is customers don't need to come first anymore, but our employees... How are you going to raise the level of customers' satisfaction? Something along that line.</p> <p>The curriculum, in my estimation, is the business strategy needed in the near future (Service Quality Management.)</p> <p>Courses, Curriculum – I liked the fact that the BA program was management focused and to compliment that the MS program was leadership focused. I thought it was very well rounded.</p> <p>Curriculum.</p> <p>Curriculum Structure/Teaching/Learning Structure.</p> <p>Probably the curriculum, as it positively blends the theoretical with the practical.</p> <p>The program was good, however it was not a good match for the market T was looking for work in. I don't feel it sells well in this particular city-Rochester.</p> <p>The graduate studies process.</p> <p>Executive Leader Program – Design –</p> <p>Curriculum – synthesis of overall coursework and work life experiences.</p> <p>The Executive Leaders Masters Program benefited my “needs” at the time – both personally and professionally.</p> <p>The overall spread of classes, (science, math, food, business)</p> <p>Program's courses, curriculum, etc. were well developed and implemented.</p> <p>The courses and curriculum were real time and real situations.</p> <p>Curriculum – Progressive and Applicable.</p> <p>Focused curriculum to the hospitality industry, hotel focus and general business topics related to other industries.</p>

Question-5 (continued)

Category	Comment
Curriculum (Continued)	<p>Curriculum – provided good understanding of service management philosophies.</p> <p>Broad based academic work i.e.; Service Management and Nutrition.</p> <p>Curriculum! Gave me the opportunity to understand more about business philosophy that I did not get as an undergraduate.</p> <p>The generality of the degree, we were exposed to a lot of material in a short time.</p> <p>Make up and design of program.</p> <p>Superiority of program.</p> <p>I was exposed to a very good balance of courses related to hospitality. I would be selfish in asking for more food related courses. I appreciated the exposure to other specialties.</p>
Interaction w/ Faculty/Staff/ Students	<p>Challenges and opportunities presented by faculty in coursework.</p> <p>The courses when we had the chance to exchange knowledge and ideas in different countries and from different workplaces.</p> <p>Also – personal contacts – both students and faculty – many long-term friendships.</p> <p>Interactive discussions on service economics and systematic management.</p> <p>The interaction with faculty and fellow students. Open forum type discussions.</p> <p>The relationships with outstanding professors and academics.</p> <p>Interaction with Professors – help given.</p> <p>Working with classmates. Diversity of business and profession helped me.</p> <p>The experienced and cutting-edge teachers.</p> <p>In depth interaction with the Food, Hotel, and Travel Management Staff.</p> <p>Great student and staff interaction.</p> <p>Caring and supportive instructors.</p> <p>Excellent faculty resources.</p>

Question-5 (continued)

Category	Comment
<p>Interaction w/ Faculty/Staff/ Students (Continued)</p>	<p>The open dialog in the classes and the opportunity to learn from my peers through their viewpoints and experiences.</p> <p>Faculty interaction with the students.</p> <p>Group discussions and analysis of pertinent issues/topics.</p> <p>Learning from “peers” and their perspective/experience brought into the classroom.</p> <p>Professors and teaching staff.</p> <p>Also, the interaction with Executive Leader students; because of that interaction, I came away from the program with a “warmer, fuzzier” feeling about the program in general.</p> <p>The instructors.</p> <p>Excellence of instruction, the people.</p> <p>Professors’ expertise – challenged my thinking process.</p> <p>Active classroom discussion gave me other insights about the topic, plus caused me to view the subject matter in other ways. Also kept me awake.</p>
<p>Materials/ Facilities</p>	<p>The course materials were top notch.</p> <p>The application of material within my career.</p> <p>Readings gave me much enhanced perspective on service industries, despite working in service industry for my entire career.</p> <p>Case Studies of Corporations and companies with a clear track record of total quality management/service.</p> <p>Courses and curriculum – in particular the case studies have prepared me to teach Hospitality Management.</p> <p>Being able to use the library off-campus.</p> <p>Content/Materials.</p> <p>Quality of material.</p> <p>Reading list – introduced me to broader reading.</p> <p>The readings.</p>

Question-5 (continued)

Category	Comment
Class Projects	<p>Projects were fabulous. Gave real life meaning to coursework!</p> <p>Many course projects allowed me to do analysis of procedures in my workplace. Changes occurred because of the findings of these projects.</p>
Flexibility	<p>Flexible Program (Exec-Leader)</p> <p>Work in specific field of interest and the ability to somewhat direct academic work. Flexibility!</p> <p>Executive Leader program was tailored to my needs, interests and ability to pursue graduate degree.</p> <p>Flexibility with timeliness for thesis/project and program curriculum.</p> <p>The time (1 to 1-1/2 years) is (was) very accommodating to people who cannot afford to spend 3 to 4 years working on an M.S.</p>
Concepts/Skills Obtained	<p>Development of creative (out-of-the-box) thinking.</p> <p>I was able to get out of the box and look at things another way.</p> <p>Time management, examination of problems in new ways that has been useful for problem analysis and decision-making.</p> <p>I became aware of the up to date management concepts, which provided me with an important basis of expanded and applicable managerial, leadership, and philosophical systems, as well as ideas that I have used in operating my business successfully.</p> <p>Problem solving/decision making template.</p> <p>Time Management.</p> <p>The ability to meet deadlines (Time Management)</p> <p>I developed a capability to analyze real life situations and problems.</p>
Assistantship	<p>I think the opportunity to teach and assist the professor helped as part of graduate work.</p> <p>Graduate assistantship doing research.</p> <p>Teaching undergraduate classes.</p>

Question-5 (continued)

Category	Comment
Class Size	<p>The class size (in my case 12 to 14) was ideal for the intellectual exchange.</p> <p>Small number of students/class.</p> <p>The small class size was very beneficial – focused!</p>
Other	<p>Coop's because they related to my field of study.</p> <p>Classroom learning and readings were the most beneficial since some of it could be applied in work environment.</p> <p>Good liaison when I attended between faculty and students.</p> <p>R.I.T. did a great job in making older students comfortable in an academic setting.</p> <p>The environment also lent to a good experience.</p> <p>Honestly, working while I attended program. Theory was valued only when applied to practical experience and vise versa.</p>

Table 4: Question-6 of the Survey

Comments of What Academic Change(s) Alumni Would Make

What change(s) would you recommend to the department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management concerning the academic program (Courses, Curriculum, Thesis, and Project?) Responses were grouped into the following seventeen categories, preceded by the actual comments.

Category	Comment
Add Course(s)	<p>More Statistics.</p> <p>Courses in Real Estate issues in Hospitality, Site Selection, Feasibility Studies, Financing Acquisitions, and Mergers.</p> <p>More shared classes with other graduate programs – Business, Human Resources, and Health Care Administration.</p> <p>More courses dealing with the management of PEOPLE not things. Also courses dealing with guest relations and actions.</p> <p>More courses related to Tourism Planning, Resort Planning and Development, Real Estate Purchases, Market and Feasibility Studies. Promotion and Marketing Development, “Green Tourism Development”, Etc.</p> <p>Courses – more integration of mathematical and accounting.</p> <p>More research methods courses to better prepare for Ph.D. program.</p> <p>More courses needed in general (program is too short – need courses in all aspects of management.</p> <p>Add more quantitative and qualitative analysis courses as required for M.S. degree. For those who go on to Ph.D. studies need their foundations.</p> <p>Increase in the level of technical courses (computer related)</p> <p>More courses on running a small business, made business plan writing. A class that went all year develops a business then starts that business.</p> <p>More emphasis on statistics.</p> <p>Possibly more graduate courses dealing with nutrition and management.</p> <p>Make benchmarking – 3 class sequence (for e.g. I, II, and III)</p>

Question-6 (continued)

Category	Comment
Add Course(s) (Continued)	<p>Have a course in Hospitality Sales and Marketing on the director's level.</p> <p>Make the courses and curriculum more completely. It is supposed to have 5 concentration offered for graduates, but not. More courses offered.</p> <p>Everyone should have to take a basic statistics course.</p> <p>More variety and flexibility in courses.</p>
Curriculum	<p>The curriculum</p> <p>I think that the research methods course could be better. Possibly split into two areas; (1) theoretical and (2) applied. In the 1st area focus on the qualitative vs. quantitative methods and distinguish between "methods and statistics." In the 2nd section the focus should be on the manipulation of data using SPSS for Windows.</p> <p>Accounting not necessary.</p> <p>More facts and theories.</p> <p>Part of curriculum that could help many is about career changes.</p> <p>Only to continue to be demanding of the students to produce the very best in their endeavors.</p> <p>I really enjoyed the Executive Leader Format, though it was very intense. I wish there was an opportunity to do the reading, texts in advance of two-week blocks. Format requires so much reading that it's difficult to comprehend and retain. I would strongly suggest a reading preparatory course; many of us in the field are not accustomed to such a large volume of material.</p> <p>Keep on the cutting edge of service.</p> <p>Development of a focus or foci for the program. Curriculum was far too loose.</p> <p>Along with the thesis project we need to do at least one or two research papers publishable.</p> <p>Keep up to date with current industry issues.</p> <p>Add work-study component in conjunction with thesis or project.</p>

Question-6 (continued)

Category	Comment
Curriculum (Continued)	<p>Require that be coupled with a strong concentration. For example service management with a minor in technical certification or service management with minor in sales and marketing certification etc.</p> <p>Continue Executive Leader offerings and expand!</p> <p>I saw no value in doing a thesis. I would eliminate it in favor of smaller Team Projects. The whole idea today is teams, however the thesis once again says, and "here is your project!"</p>
Mandatory Coops/ Internships	<p>Establish international alliances with the industry, through internship/externship for the students, faculty and industry leaders.</p> <p>Place graduate students into corporate co-op positions.</p> <p>Develop a top shelf graduate level co-op.</p> <p>More practical experience, if possible gives students a chance to practice what they learn in class. Hotel business is very practical so why limit the curriculum to class work only? Internships should be a compulsory part of the curriculum.</p> <p>Force graduate students to go on internships.</p> <p>For all students going full-time a 3 to 6 month work experience, credit, internship would have been nice to add as experience on the resume.</p> <p>Require some type of coop or internship.</p> <p>Make Co-op required in order to ease student in job finding.</p>
More Involvement w/ Community/ Business	<p>More hands-on. Rochester is a hot bed of service and manufacturing establishments. Use them more for real life situations.</p> <p>Use industry graduate contacts to provide a forum for others in program.</p> <p>I would recommend more local involvement with different national groups for all types of facilities ADA, Chef's, IFSE, and Rest groups. A student chapter in all these.</p> <p>Build more relationships with industry personnel. Have them interact more with studies and industry trends with students.</p> <p>R.I.T. might benefit students by working with corporations to do problem solving and having students work together on that process – giving them experiences to market themselves.</p>

Question-6 (continued)

Category	Comment
<p>More Involvement w/ Community/ Business (Continued)</p>	<p>Increased partnering with industry leaders – research experts. More interaction with industry through curriculum and courses.</p>
<p>Faculty/Staff</p>	<p>From an international graduate point of view, academic program is o.k. For some faculty staff. We sometimes were discriminated as Asians. The secretary of the department at the time was not nice, working on her emotional mood. However, there were still good and understanding professors of whom we admire and respect (Dr. Stockham and Dr. Domoy.)</p> <p>Have more faculty available for one on one advising.</p> <p>I also felt as a student that many of the teachers hadn't been in the real business world in a long time. The realistic approach seems watered down. The real world is hard, political, and never fair.</p> <p>However much I enjoyed the faculty personally, they need to regroup and seriously consider retirement or bringing in "new blood" into leadership positions for needed change.</p> <p>Add more seasoned industry successful executives.</p> <p>Require faculty to publish, keeps instruction fresh.</p> <p>At the time I attended the morale among faculty and staff were at an all-time low due to the "Managed Attrition" program.</p> <p>Professors spend more time with students and providing more feedback. (As simple as grading papers)</p>
<p>Increase Guidance w/ Thesis</p>	<p>Need more contact with advisor and peers, especially during thesis.</p> <p>More assistance with proper methods for surveys and thesis before project is done incorrectly.</p> <p>Little direction provided during the thesis/project.</p> <p>Earlier and more thorough guidance on thesis/project. A 2 to 3 hour seminar on "tips for success" and "errors to avoid" when doing a thesis/project would have saved me a lot of heartache and much time.</p> <p>Get in contact with students regarding thesis at least once after graduation.</p>

Question-6 (continued)

Category	Comment
Increase Staffing/Support	<p>Better management of the program! It is too much material/time/responsibility for one person to run. Need to make Service Quality Management a part of the business school where guidance and assistance can be given.</p> <p>Administration has the faculty working on too many other programs or under staffed.</p> <p>Teaching management research with intensive mentoring/support to this end.</p> <p>Faculty and program are spread too thin.</p> <p>More Full-Time Graduate Faculty.</p> <p>All faculty were overloaded with more responsibilities than they could've handled. If R.I.T. want to be a leader in education, then responsibility need to be distributed evenly to all faculty members and add some more staff members.</p>
Add Guest Lecturers	<p>Industry leaders conducting courses in exchange for the faculty and students managing international businesses.</p> <p>Perhaps dinners with guest speakers from industry.</p> <p>More industry leaders to speak as guest lecturers.</p> <p>More industry "speakers"/lecturers.</p> <p>Bring to school speakers and experienced people on the field to talk to the students about topics discussed in class.</p>
Field Trips	<p>Keep the field trip/golf outing.</p> <p>More field trips.</p> <p>More field experiences ("field trips") Bench Marking.</p> <p>Continue to encourage graduate school trip to a location. This is a great selling point that you do this for the students and also very enjoyable.</p> <p>Increase amount of field trips to different hotels and service companies so students can relate studies and courses with real situations.</p>

Question-6 (continued)

Category	Comment
<p>Increase Hospitality Focus/ Less Service/ Rename Degree</p>	<p>I finished a MS in Hospitality-Tourism Management from R.I.T. but I think most of my courses are concerned with service in general (in any areas of business e.g. banks or hospitals), instead of hotel and travel agency industry. There should be more courses in hotel and tourism. At the one-year time span I studied there, there was only one course each in both areas. I know that concept of service is very important but sometimes I also needed some courses in hotel and tourism. Otherwise I would take a master degree in service management.</p> <p>Make the degree for service businesses and not necessarily Food, Hotel, and Travel Management.</p> <p>Curriculum – more focus in the 3 areas – food, hotel and travel. Less emphasis on service theory in every course – courses are not distinct enough.</p> <p>Moving away from heavy emphasis in service management.</p>
<p>Increase Practicality of Subject Matter</p>	<p>More emphasis on thesis, make it more applied to a real project.</p> <p>Project development from new models – not based on the past.</p> <p>More real life projects.</p> <p>Make the career track more industry useful in order for graduates to market themselves.</p> <p>More projects relating to the real world.</p> <p>No papers, not realistic in the real world. Should be in proposal formats. Always to be presented to a group verbally.</p> <p>More practical experience.</p> <p>Teachers could orient colleagues to “real world” teachings as required to either successfully compete in our industry or better orient those who are career academicians to better prepare their students to industry requirements.</p> <p>Courses need to be more relevant to the jobs that are available in the market.</p> <p>Curriculum to follow more practical everyday experience in all aspects of the hospitality industry – i.e. C.M.P. material, hotel negotiations, all departmental understanding, operations, etc. CrB’s Destination Management Co., MPL, A.S.A.E. etc.</p>

Question-6 (continued)

Category	Comment
Add Ph.D. Program	<p>Develop a Doctoral Program in Service Management.</p> <p>Offer a Ph.D. option.</p> <p>More Ph.D. programs to choose particularly in Hospitality Management.</p>
More Research	<p>More academic research.</p> <p>More focus on research methods.</p>
More Realistic Expectations	<p>Don't make students feel as though they are going to graduate the program and enter into management level careers making \$50,000 – It doesn't happen – Have to start at the bottom with masters or not.</p> <p>Make prospective students aware of the industry's poor view toward education and that experience in field is more useful.</p> <p>I feel strongly I didn't get what I was promised; I'm still paying for it, literally and professionally.</p>
Less Work	<p>Less assigned reading in evenings</p>
Computer Lab	<p>The mainframe is outdated and slow.</p> <p>Using SPSS system is a bear and the technical support in the student computer area is not there. If an updated windows version is available for SPSS is available – use it.</p> <p>Fix the damn computer lab. It did not function properly when I was a student and I know, first hand, that it is not functioning properly now.</p> <p>Computer use and facilities.</p>
Other	<p>The success of the program depends on the quality of the individual students since teamwork is essential. Some better screening to determine student commitment would help.</p> <p>I would suggest that the work for the executive master's is very little in comparison to several other programs.</p> <p>To be more in focus with the needs of the students. The students come second or not at all.</p> <p>If teaching is the focus (of the program), make that clear to prospective students.</p>

Question-6 (continued)

Category	Comment
Other (Continued)	<p>Instead of expanding the program to the third world, put energy into improving and marketing the program here.</p> <p>More case studies.</p> <p>Encourage more students to do projects rather than a thesis so they can be completed with a masters sooner.</p> <p>Use more technology (i.e. lap top presentations) we had a great number of overheads transparencies.</p> <p>Set-up graduate teaching assistantships similar to that of other universities. R.I.T. treats them more like work-studies.</p> <p>Would like to have had more time for course work.</p> <p>Better assistantships in terms of more active participation in classes rather than playing a secretary.</p> <p>Most of the International students who enrolled in the program are young and inexperienced (most of them just do full-time study)</p> <p>However, R.I.T. is not a well-known name in this region (New England.) Not many people know or have heard about the name comparing with other graduates who attended those B.U. or other else.</p>

Table 5: Question-7 of the Survey

Comments of What Nonacademic Change(s) Alumni Would Make

Are there any other area(s) outside of the academic program (Student Life, Housing) that you feel R.I.T. could improve on? What are these areas? How could they be improved? Responses were grouped into the following eight categories, preceded by the actual comments.

Category	Comment
Housing	<p>Everything is o.k. especially Riverknoll. The surrounding is good and quiet. It is also convenient to go to school.</p> <p>Housing.</p> <p>Housing needs serious improvement. The rooms are simply not appropriate for business people.</p> <p>I would say the housing. It's very difficult to get on-campus apartment (Riverknoll) the first quarter or two you arrived there. Studying in a one-year program, I didn't want to move back and forth during that time. Maybe R.I.T. should reserve some areas of on-campus apartment for a new graduate student, not just for underclass students.</p> <p>Housing needs to be updated especially for graduate students in the Executive Leader Program.</p> <p>Housing – apartment style with private rooms and baths for graduate students.</p> <p>Housing is now being improved.</p> <p>Housing, graduate student housing should be more geared towards older and family oriented students.</p> <p>Yes, graduate school housing for full-time students was not very helpful when I arrived. Although I adapted, I would liked to have been assisted.</p> <p>On-Campus housing was not acceptable.</p>
Placement Services	<p>There are some quality people associated with the program. I am glad to have met them. Although I learned a lot, it has done very little for my employment situation. The placement and advisement is of little help.</p>

Question-7 (continued)

Category	Comment
<p>Placement Services (Continued)</p>	<p>There should be a job placement program that offers positions worthy of a graduate degree within the hospitality industry. The current program is non-existent, and after review of information provided to Cornell graduates it would appear that R.I.T. needs to go back to school on that process.</p> <p>As a fully employed “commuting student” I can’t comment on above (question-7) other than to urge the development of a top shelf job placement program. Without this, the R.I.T. program defeats its own purpose and undermines itself, tarnishing its previous reputation.</p> <p>Better job searching resources.</p> <p>Placement.</p> <p>Offer more assistance in finding jobs for students after completing coursework.</p> <p>The co-op office is the worst; they were no help.</p> <p>Graduate job placement and recruitment by using the undergraduate program as a “model” to implement a system for the graduate program.</p> <p>Also, job connections.</p>
<p>Student Life</p>	<p>More athletics.</p> <p>More cultural activities.</p> <p>Student Life.</p> <p>R.I.T. provided little interaction beyond our department. It was next to impossible to meet anyone else.</p> <p>Student life – there is very little for graduate students to do in their spare time.</p>
<p>Tuition/Value</p>	<p>Payment for the binding of the thesis/project. I mean, if I spend \$14,000 to \$20,000 on any education, do you think R.I.T. can foot the bill for binding?</p> <p>On campus shopping is more expensive than in town! I wonder why. I think students should be given more discounts considering how expensive R.I.T. is in terms of tuition and housing.</p>

Category	Comment
Tuition/Value (Continued)	<p>Also, when does tuition become more affordable for incoming students? The reason for this is tuition rate has been going up at an astronomical rate over the past 15 years! Therefore, they (R.I.T.) will price themselves out of middle class (even upper middle class) market. Something need to be done! Economically, tuition rates are far outpacing the economy's inflation rates. Therefore creating an economic disparity for students to keep up with!</p> <p>Housing is extremely expensive at R.I.T. not all students can afford it.</p> <p>Lower the tuition.</p>
Parking	<p>Penalties for parking – Too Stiff.</p> <p>Parking!</p> <p>More Parking.</p> <p>Improve parking.</p>
Increase Staff	<p>More resources from the department. Staffs were terribly under resourced.</p>
Comfort	<p>Classroom space with air conditioning.</p> <p>Comfort of classrooms inadequate.</p>
Other	<p>Library resources. The key research journals (international included) should be easily available.</p> <p>The banning of alcohol on campus is ridiculous! Responsible consumption needs education, not abstinence.</p> <p>A graduate alumni organization would be nice.</p> <p>One-on-one meetings with graduate students to develop a marketable career assessment.</p> <p>Support areas such as bookstore, financial aid, etc.</p> <p>Communication from the department on a timely, consistent basis.</p> <p>Promotional? Perhaps</p>

Tables 6, 7, 8, and 9 displayed below show the quantities within categories of responses to Questions 4, 5, 6, and 7 respectively. The category refers to the group the response was assigned to. Missing cases are defined as the number of respondents not answering the question. Valid cases are defined as the number of respondents answering the question. The percent of responses are equal to the count divided by the total count. The percent of cases are equal to the count divided by the total number of valid cases. The percent of case total equals the total response count divided by the number of valid cases. It is important to note that due to the fact that respondents sometimes elicited more than one comment per question, the total number of responses by count is higher than the number of valid cases.

Table 6: Question 4 of the Survey

Reason For Not Choosing R.I.T. Again Multiple Response

Category	Count	% of Responses	% of Cases
Curriculum	6	40.0	60.0
Career	4	26.7	40.0
Value	3	20.0	30.0
Faculty & Support	1	6.7	10.0
Geographic	1	6.7	10.0
Total responses	15	100.0	150.0

(91 missing cases; 10 valid cases)

Table 7: Question-5 of the Survey
Benefited Alumni Most Multiple Response

Category	Count	% of Responses	% of Cases
Courses	33	22.0	36.3
Curriculum	24	16.0	26.4
Interaction with Students/Faculty	20	13.3	22.0
Materials/Facilities	9	6.0	9.9
Concepts/Skills Obtained	7	4.7	7.7
Flexibility	5	3.3	5.5
Class Projects	4	2.7	4.4
Assistantship	3	2.0	3.3
Class Size	3	2.0	3.3
Other	3	2.0	3.3
Total responses	150	100.0	164.8

(10 missing cases; 91 valid cases)

Table 8: Question-6 of the Survey**Recommended Academic Change Multiple Response**

Category	Count	% of Responses	% of Cases
Regarding Curriculum	15	13.2	20.0
Add Course(s)	14	12.3	18.7
Other Academic Issues	14	12.3	18.7
Increase Practicality of Subject Matter	11	9.6	14.7
Mandatory Coops/Internships	9	7.9	12.0
Regarding Faculty	7	6.1	9.3
More Involvement With Community & Local Business	6	5.3	8.0
Increase Guidance With Thesis	5	4.4	6.7
Increase Staffing/Support	5	4.4	6.7
Add Guest Lecturers	5	4.4	6.
More Field Trips	5	4.4	6.7
Increase Hospitality Focus/ Less Service/Rename Degree	4	3.5	5.3
Add Ph.D. Program	3	2.6	4.0
More Research	3	2.6	4.0
More Realistic Expectations	3	2.6	4.0
Regarding Computer Lab	3	2.6	4.0
Less Work	2	1.8	2.7
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Total responses	114	100.0	152.0

(26 missing cases; 75 valid cases)

Table 9: Question-7 of the Survey**Other Recommended Change (Nonacademic) Multiple Response**

Category	Count	% of Responses	% of Cases
Regarding Housing	10	24.4	29.4
Regarding Placement Services	8	19.5	23.5
Other Nonacademic Issues	6	14.6	17.6
Regarding Student Life	5	12.2	14.7
Regarding Tuition/Value	4	9.8	11.8
Regarding Parking	4	9.8	11.8
Increase Staff	2	4.9	5.9
Regarding Physical Comfort	2	4.9	5.9
Total responses	41	100.0	120.6

(67 missing cases; 34 valid cases)

Expected vs. Actual Results

Confined in this section is a comparison of satisfied and dissatisfied alumni from R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management graduate studies. Twelve factors are cross-tabulated with the satisfaction criteria gathered from question four of the mail survey. These factors are as follows; nationality, gender, age, employment status, duration for hiring, program format, current income, promotions, duration for promotion, major field of study, related occupation to field of study, and year of graduation. Further, the alumni's year of graduation and clustered current income were cross-tabulated.

Expectations

In the following section of this study the expectations of the researcher will be addressed. This is to include the factors, which are expected to contribute to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of alumni.

- Executive Leader graduates will be more likely to be satisfied with their experiences at R.I.T.
- Higher current annual income rates will yield higher satisfaction rates. Inversely, lower current annual income rates will yield lower satisfaction rates.
- Alumni who have not been in work related to their field of study will have lower rate of satisfaction.
- Alumni who have not received a promotion will have lower satisfaction rates. Additionally, the level of satisfaction decreases as the duration for a promotion increases.

- Graduates who are unemployed will have lower satisfaction rates.
- Alumni who took longer to obtain employment will have a lower level of satisfaction.
- Alumni from earlier years of graduation will have higher current income than those of later years of graduation. Since it is expected that alumni with greater levels of income will have higher satisfaction rates than alumni from earlier years of graduation will have higher rates of satisfaction.

Results

The actual outcomes are addressed in the following cross-tabulations preceded by a narrative description that presents highlighted data. The areas covered are limited to the seven expectations and such demographic information as nationality, gender, age, and major course of study.

Table 10: Employment Status * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 10 shows of the 5 unemployed graduates 40% would not choose R.I.T. again. In contrast, of the 84 graduates employed full-time only 8.3% would not choose R.I.T. again. This dissatisfaction percentile remains exactly consistent with the 12 graduates who are employed part-time at 8.3%.

Table 10: Employment Status * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Employment Status	Employed F/T	Count	76	7	1	84
		% Within Employment Status	90.5%	8.3%	1.2%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	84.4%	70.0%	100.0%	83.2%
		% Of Total	75.2%	6.9%	1.0%	83.2%
	Employed P/T	Count	11	1		12
		% Within Employment Status	91.7%	8.3%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	12.2%	10.0%		11.9%
		% Of Total	10.9%	1.0%		11.9%
	Unemployed	Count	3	2		5
		% Within Employment Status	60.0%	40.0%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	3.3%	20.0%		5.0%
		% Of Total	3.0%	2.0%		5.0%
Total		Count	90	10	1	101
		% Within Employment Status	89.1%	9.9%	1.0%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% Of Total	89.1%	9.9%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 11: Time To Find Employment (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 11 shows of the 6 graduates that took longer than six months to find an occupation zero would not choose R.I.T. again. In contrast, of the 81 graduates who found employment in six months or less from graduation 8.5% would not attend R.I.T. again.

Table 11: Time To Find Employment (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Time To Find Employment (Clustered)	6 Months or Less	Count	74	7	1	82
		% Within Time To Find Employment (Clustered)	90.2%	8.5%	1.2%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	86.0%	87.5%	100.0%	86.3%
		% Of Total	77.9%	7.4%	1.1%	86.3%
	Over 6 Months	Count	6			6
		% Within Time To Find Employment (Clustered)	100.0%			100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	7.0%			6.3%
		% Of Total	6.3%			6.3%
	Has Not Found Employment	Count	1			1
		% Within Time To Find Employment (Clustered)	100.0%			100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	1.2%			1.1%
		% Of Total	1.1%			1.1%
	Non Applicable	Count	5	1		6
		% Within Time To Find Employment (Clustered)	83.3%	16.7%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	5.8%	12.5%		6.3%
		% Of Total	5.3%	1.1%		6.3%
Total		Count	86	8	1	95
		% Within Time To Find Employment (Clustered)	90.5%	8.4%	1.1%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% Of Total	90.5%	8.4%	1.1%	100.0%

Table 12: Format * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 12: Of the 35 executive leader alumni only 1 or 3% would not chose R.I.T. again. Of the 56 traditional format full-time alumni 7 or 13% would not choose R.I.T. again with one uncertain. Of the 10 traditional format part-time alumni 2 or 20% would not choose R.I.T again.

Table 12: Format * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Format	Executive Leader	Count	34	1		35
		% Within Format	97.1%	2.9%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	37.8%	10.0%		34.7%
		% Of Total	33.7%	1.0%		34.7%
	Traditional F/T	Count	48	7	1	56
		% Within Format	85.7%	12.5%	1.8%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	53.3%	70.0%	100.0%	55.4%
		% Of Total	47.5%	6.9%	1.0%	55.4%
	Traditional P/T	Count	8	2		10
		% Within Format	80.0%	20.0%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	8.9%	20.0%		9.9%
		% Of Total	7.9%	2.0%		9.9%
Total		Count	90	10	1	101
		% Within Format	89.1%	9.9%	1.0%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% Of Total	89.1%	9.9%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 13: Gender * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 13: Of the 47 female alumni 7 or 15% would not choose R.I.T again. Of the 53 male alumni only 2 or 4% would not choose R.I.T. again.

Table 13: Gender * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Gender	Female	Count	39	7	1	47
		% Within Gender	83.0%	14.9%	2.1%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	43.3%	77.8%	100.0%	47.0%
		% Of Total	39.0%	7.0%	1.0%	47.0%
	Male	Count	51	2		53
		% Within Gender	96.2%	3.8%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	56.7%	22.2%		53.0%
		% Of Total	51.0%	2.0%		53.0%
Total	Count	90	9	1	100	
	% Within Gender	90.0%	9.0%	1.0%	100.0%	
	% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% Of Total	90.0%	9.0%	1.0%	100.0%	

Table 14: Current Income (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 14: Of the 33 alumni with a current salary of less than \$35,000 (The three lowest pay categories) 6 or 18% would not choose R.I.T. again. Of the 65 alumni with a current salary of \$35,000 or greater (The three highest pay categories) 2 or 3% would not choose R.I.T. again.

Table 14: Current Income (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Current Income (Clustered)	\$0 - \$34,999	Count	27	6		33
		% Within Current Income (Clustered)	81.8%	18.2%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	30.7%	66.7%		33.7%
		% Of Total	27.6%	6.1%		33.7%
	\$35,000 or Greater	Count	61	2	1	64
		% Within Current Income (Clustered)	95.3%	3.1%	1.6%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	69.3%	22.2%	100.0%	65.3%
		% Of Total	62.2%	2.0%	1.0%	65.3%
	Non Applicable	Count		1		1
		% Within Current Income (Clustered)		100.0%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again		11.1%		1.0%
		% Of Total		1.0%		1.0%
Total		Count	88	9	1	98
		% Within Current Income (Clustered)	89.8%	9.2%	1.0%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% Of Total	89.8%	9.2%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 15: Received Promotion * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 15 shows of the 49 alumni that have not received a promotion 8 or 16% would choose not to attend R.I.T. again. Of the 47 alumni that have received a promotion 1 or 2% would choose not to attend R.I.T. again.

Table 15: Received Promotlon * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Received Promotion	Yes	Count	46	1		47
		% Within Received Promotion	97.9%	2.1%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	52.3%	10.0%		47.5%
		% Of Total	46.5%	1.0%		47.5%
	No	Count	40	8	1	49
		% Within Received Promotion	81.6%	16.3%	2.0%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	45.5%	80.0%	100.0%	49.5%
		% Of Total	40.4%	8.1%	1.0%	49.5%
	Non Applicable	Count	2	1		3
		% Within Received Promotion	66.7%	33.3%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	2.3%	10.0%		3.0%
		% Of Total	2.0%	1.0%		3.0%
Total		Count	88	10	1	99
		% Within Received Promotion	88.9%	10.1%	1.0%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% Of Total	88.9%	10.1%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 16: Time to Receive First Promotion (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table16 shows of the 30 alumni who have received a promotion in twelve months or less zero would not choose R.I.T. again. For those 13 alumni who took longer than twelve months 7.7% would not choose R.I.T. again.

Table16: Time to Receive First Promotion (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Time to Receive First Promotion (Clustered)	12 Months or Under	Count	30			30
		% Within Time to Receive First Promotion (Clustered)	100.0%			100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	34.9%			30.9%
		% Of Total	30.9%			30.9%
	Over 12 Months	Count	12	1		13
		% Within Time to Receive First Promotion (Clustered)	92.3%	7.7%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	14.0%	10.0%		13.4%
		% Of Total	12.4%	1.0%		13.4%
	Non Applicable	Count	4	1		5
		% Within Time to Receive First Promotion (Clustered)	80.0%	20.0%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	4.7%	10.0%		5.2%
		% Of Total	4.1%	1.0%		5.2%
	Not Present	Count	40	8	1	49
		% Within Time to Receive First Promotion (Clustered)	81.6%	16.3%	2.0%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	46.5%	80.0%	100.0%	50.5%
		% Of Total	41.2%	8.2%	1.0%	50.5%
Total		Count	86	10	1	97
		% Within Time to Receive First Promotion (Clustered)	88.7%	10.3%	1.0%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% Of Total	88.7%	10.3%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 17: Age (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 17 shows of the 54 alumni who were 34 years old and younger 13.0% would not choose R.I.T. again. Of the 46 alumni who were 35 year old and older 6.5% would not choose R.I.T. again.

Table 17: Age (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Age (Clustered)	34 Years & Under	Count	47	7		54
		% Within Age (Clustered)	87.0%	13.0%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	52.8%	70.0%		54.0%
		% Of Total	47.0%	7.0%		54.0%
	35 Years & Over	Count	42	3	1	46
		% Within Age (Clustered)	91.3%	6.5%	2.2%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	47.2%	30.0%	100.0%	46.0%
		% Of Total	42.0%	3.0%	1.0%	46.0%
Total	Count	89	10	1	100	
	% Within Age (Clustered)	89.0%	10.0%	1.0%	100.0%	
	% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% Of Total	89.0%	10.0%	1.0%	100.0%	

Table 18: Related Employment to Field of Study * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 18 shows of the 13 alumni who have not been employed in their major field of study 30.8% would not choose to attend R.I.T. again. Of the 87 alumni who have been employed in their major field of study 7.0% would choose not to attend R.I.T. again.

Table 18: Related Employment to Field of Study * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Related Employment to Field of Study	Yes	Count	80	6	1	87
		% Within Related Employment to Field of Study	92.0%	6.9%	1.1%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	89.9%	60.0%	100.0%	87.0%
		% Of Total	80.0%	6.0%	1.0%	87.0%
	No	Count	9	4		13
		% Within Related Employment to Field of Study	69.2%	30.8%		100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	10.1%	40.0%		13.0%
		% Of Total	9.0%	4.0%		13.0%
Total	Count		89	10	1	100
	% Within Related Employment to Field of Study		89.0%	10.0%	1.0%	100.0%
	% Within Choose R.I.T. Again		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% Of Total		89.0%	10.0%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 19: Major Field of Study * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 19 shows of the 11 alumni who majored in Service Management zero would not choose R.I.T. again. Where as of the 90 alumni who majored in Hospitality Management 10 (11%) would not choose R.I.T. again.

Table 19: Major Field of Study * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Major Field of Study	Hospitality	Count	79	10	1	90
		% Within Major Field of Study	87.8%	11.1%	1.1%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	87.8%	100.0%	100.0%	89.1%
		% Of Total	78.2%	9.9%	1.0%	89.1%
	Service	Count	11			11
		% Within Major Field of Study	100.0%			100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	12.2%			10.9%
		% Of Total	10.9%			10.9%
Total		Count	90	10	1	101
		% Within Major Field of Study	89.1%	9.9%	1.0%	100.0%
		% Within Choose R.I.T. Again	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% Of Total	89.1%	9.9%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 20: Year of Graduation (Clustered) * Current Income (Clustered) Cross tabulation

Table 20 shows 55% of the alumni graduating from 1995 to 1997 have a current income of \$35,000 or greater. Further, Table 20 shows 70.6% of the alumni graduating from 1992 to 1994 have a current income of \$35,000 or greater. Last, Table 20 shows 75% of the alumni graduating from 1988 to 1991 have a current income of \$35,000 or greater.

Table 20: Year of Graduation (Clustered) * Current Income (Clustered) Cross tabulation						
			Current Income (Clustered)			Total
			\$0 - \$34,999	\$35,000 or Greater	Non Applicable	
Year of Graduation (Clustered)	1988 To 1991	Count	5	18	1	24
		% Within Year of Graduation (Clustered)	20.8%	75.0%	4.2%	100.0%
	1992 To 1994	Count	10	24		34
		% Within Year of Graduation (Clustered)	29.4%	70.6%		100.0%
	1995 To 1997	Count	18	22		40
		% Within Year of Graduation (Clustered)	45.0%	55.0%		100.0%
Total		Count	33	64	1	98
		% Within Year of Graduation (Clustered)	33.7%	65.3%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 21: Year of Graduation (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation

Table 21 shows the level of satisfaction represented by answering yes to the following question “If you had the chance to make the decision again would you choose to attend R.I.T.?” In addition, Table 21 shows 92.9% of the alumni graduating from 1995 to 1997 would choose R.I.T. again. Further, Table 21 shows 85.7% of the alumni graduating from 1992 to 1994 would choose R.I.T. again. Last, Table 21 shows 87.5% of the alumni graduating from 1988 to 1991 would choose R.I.T. again.

Table 18: Year of Graduation (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Year of Graduation (Clustered)	1988 To 1991	Count	21	3		24
		% Within Year of Graduation (Clustered)	87.5%	12.5%		100.0%
	1992 To 1994	Count	30	4	1	35
		% Within Year of Graduation (Clustered)	85.7%	11.4%	2.9%	100.0%
	1995 To 1997	Count	39	3		42
		% Within Year of Graduation (Clustered)	92.9%	7.1%		100.0%
Total		Count	90	10	1	101
		% Within Year of Graduation (Clustered)	89.1%	9.9%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 22: Type of Student (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross Tabulation

Table 22 shows of the 17 international alumni 29.4% would not choose to attend R.I.T. again. Of the 84 domestic alumni 6.0% would choose not to attend R.I.T. again.

Table 22: Type of Student (Clustered) * Choose R.I.T. Again Cross Tabulation						
			Choose R.I.T. Again			Total
			Yes	No	Uncertain	
Type of Student (Clustered)	International	Count	12	5		17
		% within Type of Student (Clustered)	70.6%	29.4%		100.0%
		% of Total	11.9%	5.0%		16.8%
	U.S.	Count	78	5	1	84
		% within Type of Student (Clustered)	92.9%	6.0%	1.2%	100.0%
		% of Total	77.2%	5.0%	1.0%	83.2%
Total		Count	90	10	1	101
		% within Type of Student (Clustered)	89.1%	9.9%	1.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	89.1%	9.9%	1.0%	100.0%

Summary

The results and findings of this study have been divided into three separate sections. These include descriptive statistics, qualitative information and explanation, and a comparison of the expected and actual results of this study.

In the descriptive statistics section the researcher examined the data reported from the mail survey. First, the researcher explained the grouping or clustering of the responses to the questions posed in the survey. The former section presented the tabulated data for questions 1 to 4 and 8 to 17 from the survey in graphic form. In addition, the coded survey data of program type and the year of graduation was tabulated and presented in graphic form. This information was tabulated by frequency and presented in percent of total responses. Finally, the response rate was cross-tabulated with the year of graduation group.

In the qualitative information and explanation section the researcher has defined the categories of the qualitative data and provided a comparison of satisfied alumni and dissatisfied alumni. The qualitative data categories have been defined through a listing of the exact comments of the respondents and located in narrative tables. In addition, the average number of comments to each question for the satisfied and dissatisfied groups has been calculated and the number of non-responses accumulated.

In the comparison of the expected and actual results section is a comparison of satisfied and dissatisfied alumni from R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel

Management graduate studies. Twelve factors are cross-tabulated with the satisfaction criteria gathered from question four of the mail survey. These factors are as follows; nationality, gender, age, employment status, duration for hiring, program format, current income, promotions, duration for promotion, major field of study, related occupation to field of study, and year of graduation. Further, the alumni's year of graduation and clustered current income were cross-tabulated.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

Introduction

What factors contribute to the satisfaction of graduates of a higher educational institution? Specifically, what are the factors affecting alumni satisfaction of Rochester Institute of Technology's (R.I.T.) Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management Master's degree programs? How does alumni satisfaction relate to various demographic information such as time to find employment, employment status, employment within the related field of study, current salary, nationality, promotability, gender, age, and field of study? In the previous chapters the researcher addressed these questions and will now discuss the impact of these answers.

The discussion of this study may be divided into three sections. These sections include conclusions based on the data, recommendations and summary. The discussion is consequently arranged accordingly.

Conclusions

- The conclusions of this thesis are based on the qualitative information and explanation and the comparison of the expected and the actual results sections found in chapter four. The alumni satisfaction level of the graduate programs of the Department of F.H.T.M. has been established at over eighty-nine percent meeting the criteria for a high level of satisfaction. It would appear that; (1) Executive Leader graduates are more likely to be satisfied with their experiences

at R.I.T; (2) higher current annual income rates yield higher satisfaction rates.

Conversely, lower current annual income rates yield lower satisfaction rates; (3)

alumni who have not been in work related to their field of study have lower rate

of satisfaction; (4) alumni who have not received a promotion have lower

satisfaction rates; (5) the level of satisfaction decreases as the duration to receive

a promotion increases; (6) graduates who are unemployed have lower satisfaction

rates; (7) alumni who took longer to obtain employment have a higher level of

satisfaction; (8) alumni from earlier years of graduation have higher current

income than those of later years of graduation; (9) alumni with greater levels of

income have higher satisfaction rates; (10) alumni in the Hospitality Management

Major have a lower level of satisfaction than those in the Service Management

Major; (11) younger alumni have a lower level of satisfaction than more senior

alumni; (12) international alumni have a lower level of satisfaction than alumni

from the United States; (13) improvements need to be made to the areas of student

housing, placement office, number of courses offered, practicality of subject

matter and value; (14) female alumni have a lower level of satisfaction than male

alumni; (15) the current courses and the interaction amongst faculty and students

should be maintained. However, it does not appear that alumni from earlier years

of graduation have higher rates of satisfaction

Recommendations

The recommendations of this thesis are limited to the following six subject areas

Long Term Consequences, Marketing, Quality Improvement Program, Further

Studies, General and Refining the Questionnaire. The first five areas are discussed in the following section. A narrative in bullet format on refining the questionnaire then precedes the first section.

- Due to the apparent influence employment factors have on the level of satisfaction of alumni and information of the narrative tables, R.I.T. should invest more resources in the development of its placement office.
- Since there were many praises of R.I.T. from the alumni, R.I.T. should use more testimonials in their prospective student literature.
- Further, R.I.T. should consider the use of alumni panel focus groups to further research alumni attitudes.
- R.I.T. should disclose the high rate of satisfaction in their prospective student literature.
- The Office of Admissions, Alumni Affairs and the Department of F.H.T.M. should maintain a copy of this thesis, advertise its presence and make it available to prospective students, students and graduates.
- R.I.T. should use this study to identify critical incidents and implement a critical incident approach system to R.I.T. Department of F.H.T.M.
- Needs improvement and strong points of the academic and nonacademic areas should be extracted and used in the Total Quality Management of R.I.T.
- Information should be used to identify potential problem areas that reported lower than average satisfaction rates to include major field of study, gender, age, type of program and nationality.

- The narrative tables should be used to identify solutions for areas that have been identified as needing improvement.
- An exact replicative study should be conducted in order to test the validity of the findings of this study.
- A similar study should be conducted at the undergraduate level of the department of F.H.T.M.
- Conduct further detailed studies to analyze the differences in the level of satisfaction of graduates from the following categories type of program, major field of study, gender, nationality and age.
- Use the information obtained to improve R.I.T. and gain a strategic advantage over its competitors. Major areas of concern are student housing, placement office, and the number of courses offered, value and the practicality of subject material.
- R.I.T. should distribute a synopsis of this study in order to enhance its word of mouth advertising.
- Incorporate the knowledge acquired from this study into the Supporting Student Success Program at R.I.T.
- Group narrative comments by the satisfaction category and examine data for trends.

Summary

The alumni satisfaction level of the graduate programs of the Department of F.H.T.M. has been established at 89.1 percent. Proving the hypothesis of this study that

R.I.T.'s Department of F.H.T.M. graduates would display a high satisfaction rate. The hygiene factors that impact satisfaction and how these factors relate to alumni satisfaction and various demographic information have been represented in chapter four.

This thesis acts as a resource of information for prospective students, faculty, staff, alumni, students, and administrators of R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management. The research has been used to reveal what elements of R.I.T. benefited the alumni the most and what changes the graduates would recommend. Quality factors have been examined to determine their impact on alumni satisfaction. In addition, any associations among quality factors and demographic factors of alumni have been identified.

The importance of this study lies in its ability to identify and measure factors affecting the satisfaction of graduates from R.I.T.'s Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management masters programs. This study may now be used to improve the program and give it a competitive advantage over other academic institutions.

R.I.T. has already worked at solving some of the complaints registered in this study. Emplacing a systematic approach for improving student retention rates known as the Supporting Student Success Program. R.I.T. has worked at "softening" the campus through the installation of Java Wally's. Improvements have been made in other areas as well to include campus housing, increased availability of technology based classroom equipment, new windows to better insulate the George Eastman Building, and new equipment in the department's computer lab.

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12 December 1997

Ms Kathryn A Yantch
1579 Ridge Road
Ontario NY 14519

School of Food, Hotel and Travel
Management
Department of Graduate Studies
George Eastman Building
10 Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, New York 14623-5604
~~716-475-5666~~ Fax ~~716-475-6401~~

The Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management Masters degree program is approaching it's tenth anniversary! However, until now no research has been attempted to collect information from you, the alumni. This information will be used to improve the program.

As one of the selected graduates from the program your opinion is vitally important. In order that the results will truly represent the alumni, it is critical that you complete and return the questionnaire.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number. So we may check your name off when you return the completed questionnaire. In addition your major and year of graduation are identified for statistical purposes only.

The data of this research will form the basis of my thesis. My thesis will be made available to the faculty and administration of R.I.T.'s department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management and other interested parties. Allow me again to emphasize that respondents names will not be mentioned or identified in my thesis or any other analysis. You may receive a summary of the results by writing "copy of results requested" on the back of the return envelope, and printing your name and address below it. Please Do Not write this information on the questionnaire itself.

I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Please call, fax or write. The telephone number is (716) 586-3424 and the fax is (716) 586-3424. My thesis committee which consists of Dr. Marecki, Dr. Stockham, and Mr. Steffens send their regards and appreciate your response.

Thank you very much for your participation and in helping me become an alum.

Sincerely,



Rick Farran
Graduate Student

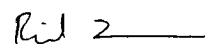
24 December 1997

Last week a survey requesting your views regarding RIT's School of Food Hotel and Travel Management Master's degree program was sent to you.

If you have finished and returned it to us please take our genuine thanks. If not, please complete and return the survey today. Due to the small population and sample sizes a return rate of 75 percent is needed in order to draw accurate conclusions. Thus it is very important that we receive your completed survey.

If you have not received the survey or can not locate, please call me at this time. You may call me collect (716-586-3424) for an immediate replacement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rick Farran', followed by a horizontal line.

Rick Farran
Graduate Student

12 January 1998

Name

Street Address

City, State Zip code

School of Food, Hotel and Travel
Management
Department of Graduate Studies
George Eastman Building
10 Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, NY 14623-5604
716-475-5666 Fax 716-475-6401

Approximately 4 weeks ago I sent you a survey requesting your opinion about the Department of Food, Hotel and Tourism Management Masters degree program. As of today your completed questionnaire has not been received.

The Masters degree program is approaching its tenth year anniversary! Until now no research has been attempted to collect information from you, the alumni. This information will be used to form a database on which better decisions may be made.

As one of the selected graduates from the program your opinion is vitally important. In order that the results will truly represent the alumni, it is critical that you complete and return the questionnaire.

Another questionnaire is enclosed in case the original has been misplaced. Thank you very much for your participation and in helping me become an alumni.

Sincerely,



Rick Farran
Graduate Student



2 February 1998

Name
Street Address
City, State Zip code

Rochester Institute of Technology

School of Food, Hotel and Travel
Management
Department of Graduate Studies
George Eastman Building
10 Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, NY 14623-5604
716-475-5666 Fax 716-475-6401

Approximately 7 weeks ago I sent you a survey requesting your opinion about the Department of Food, Hotel and Tourism Management Masters degree program. As of today your completed questionnaire has not been received.

As one of the selected graduates from the program your opinion is vitally important. In order that the results will truly represent the alumni, it is critical that you complete and return the questionnaire.

Another questionnaire is enclosed in case the original has been misplaced. Thank you very much for your participation and in helping me become an alumni.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Farran", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Rick Farran
Graduate Student

**A DECADE OF LEARNING: A SURVEY OF MASTERS DEGREE ALUMNI FROM
THE ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
OF FOOD, HOTEL, AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT**

This survey was designed to obtain information from you, the graduates of R.I.T.'s department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management master's degree programs. The information you supply us with will be used to establish a database which may ultimately be used to aid prospective students, students, graduates, staff, and faculty. Please use the space in the margins to qualify an answer or make any comments on questions. Anything you add will be read and considered. Those who attended R.I.T. for graduate and undergraduate work should refer only to your experience at the graduate level when answering this questionnaire.

Thank you for your assistance.



**Department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rochester NY 14623**

Q-1 Have you received another degree since attending R.I.T.? (Circle number)
1 Yes (Please specify type of degree and major field of study) _____

2 No _____

Q-2 Are you currently in another educational program? (Circle number)

1 Graduate School Full-Time

2 Graduate School Part-Time

3 Not Attending School

4 Professional School (e.g. Law, Medicine, etc.)

5 Other (Please Specify) _____

Q-3 What is your current employment status? (Circle number)

1 Employed Full-Time

2 Employed Part-Time

3 Unemployed and Seeking Employment

4 Unemployed and Not Seeking Employment

Q-4 If you had the chance to make the decision again would you choose to attend R.I.T.?

1 Yes

2 No (Please explain) _____

Q-5 In regards to the academic program (Courses, Curriculum, Thesis, Project.) What benefited you the most? Why?

Q-6 What change(s) would you recommend to the department of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management concerning the academic program (Courses, Curriculum, Thesis, Project?)

Q-7 Are there any other area(s) outside of the academic program (Student life, Housing) that you feel R.I.T. could improve on? What are these areas? How could they be improved?

Q-8 What type of program were you enrolled at R.I.T.? (Circle number)

- 1 Executive Leader Format (Starting in 1990)
- 2 Traditional Format / Full-Time
- 3 Traditional Format / Part-Time

Q-9 What type of student were you? (Circle number)

- 1 International
- 2 US Citizen
- 3 Canada

Q-10 What is your sex? (Circle number)

- 1 Female
- 2 Male

Q-11 How old are you? (Circle number 1-5)

1 Under 25 years

4 45 - 55 years

2 25 - 34 years

5 Over 55 years

3 35 - 44 years

Q-12 Since your graduation from R.I.T. have you been employed in a job related to your major field of study? (Circle number)

1 Yes

2 No, I wanted to change fields

3 No, I could not find a job in my field

4 No, I have not found employment

5 No, Other (Please Specify) _____

Q-13 How long did it take you to obtain employment after graduation? _____ Month(s)

Q-14 What is/was your latest title held at your most recent job? _____

Q-15 Have you received a promotion? (Circle number)

1 Yes (Please specify how long after graduation. If you have received more than one promotion since graduation refer to your first promotion) _____ Month(s) _____ Year(s)

2 No

Q-16 What was your starting gross annual income in US dollars? (Circle number 1-6)

1 \$0 - \$19,999

4 \$30,000 - \$34,999

2 \$20,000 - \$24,999

5 \$35,000 - \$39,999

3 \$25,000 - \$29,999

6 \$40,000 or Greater

Q-17 What is your current gross annual income in US dollars? (Circle number 1-6)

1 \$0 - \$24,999

4 \$35,000 - \$39,999

2 \$25,000 - \$29,999

5 \$40,000 - \$44,999

3 \$30,000 - \$34,999

6 \$45,000 or Greater

The information you have provided is greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of the results please write your name and address on the back of the return envelope (Not on the questionnaire itself.) We will insure that you receive it.